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PUBLICATIONS OF THE NEBRASKA  
STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

COMPLIMENTS OF THE  
NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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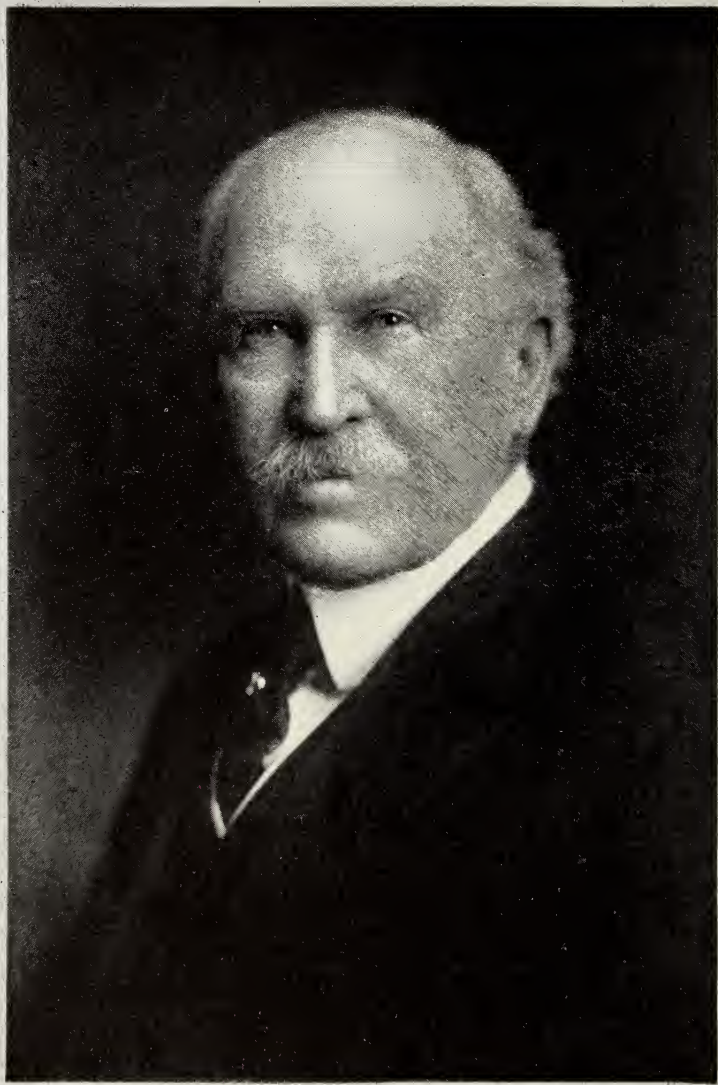






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COLLECTIONS

OF THE

Nebraska State Historical  
Society

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Edited by  
ALBERT WATKINS  
Historian of the Society

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LINCOLN, NEBRASKA  
The Nebraska State Historical Society  
1913  
VOLUME XVII

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## THE WORK OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Annual Address of John Lee Webster, President, 1912

In the preparation of what I am about to say in this address, I had in mind a broader purpose than merely interesting the members of the Nebraska State Historical Society in the wealth of its possessions and the work it is doing. I wish as much as possible to interest all the people of the state in the variety and character of the material that has been collected and is preserved in the museum and in the extent and scope of the reference library of the society. I wished to create, if I could, in the minds of the people a desire to visit our rooms and to look at what we have. I hoped to induce the state to be sufficiently liberal in its appropriations to properly maintain and house these priceless records of its history.

History, of all studies, "contains the greatest amount of instructions and of principles and of ideas in the facts which it relates." "Humanity, viewed as a whole, is the most interesting subject for man." "Every man that comes into the world should make himself acquainted with the place he occupies in the order of time, the increasing or decreasing of civilization, age by age." The picture of humanity should be painted with broad strokes, as a Turner would use the brush, for the eyes of the people to see and enjoy it. History develops thought because it contains the elements of reflection, and by this process it develops conscience in the people. These are but glimpses of some of the primary purposes of state historical societies which make them worthy of state support and of the patronage of the people.

What Shakespeare said of the players might appropriately be said of the weekly and daily newspapers. They are the journals and diaries of the political, social, and business events of the time. In social science research the investigator goes to the newspapers to find the manner in which the people lived, their habits of life, the equipment of the social household, the schools of instruction, the growth of villages and towns, the advancement in local municipal government. They contain substantially the only record we have of the lives and hardships, the bravery, daring and adventures of the early pioneers.

The State Historical Society has on its shelves more than four thousand bound volumes of newspapers. They have a value which, to the investigator of the events of the past, cannot be overestimated. To the social science teacher, and to the historian, they furnish the elementary data and are the primary source of information. They will be all the more valuable a hundred years from now, and they will be prized still more highly a thousand years hence.

If it were possible to discover such a storehouse of information in the ruins of Babylon or Nineveh or Pompeii as these newspaper files of the society contain of the present times, all the civilized nations would be anxious for their possession, the reading world would wish every page translated into their respective languages, and the wealthy museums and historical societies would offer fabulous prices for their purchase.

It is but natural for us to have a curiosity to know what manner of men may have peopled these prairies hundreds, yes, thousands of years ago. What men were here on these prairies in the age when the Duke of Normandy invaded England? What men were here, and what were they doing, and what was their manner of living, in the age when Charlemagne achieved his greatest conquests and became the despotic ruler of all Europe? Yes, more, what may have



been the character of the people who roamed over these prairies, now comprising our state of Nebraska, in the days of old when the Pharaohs ruled over Egypt, or when the pyramids were built?

In the museum of the society there are some five thousand different specimens of stone implements, including stone axes, stone war clubs, household and mechanical utensils, and samples of pottery. Many of these were made by a people who lived at a time antedating any history we have of any of the Indian tribes of which we have any knowledge. How old may be some of these antique specimens and relics? No man knows. Centuries and centuries may have gone by since some of them were made.

We know but little of these prehistoric people; but in a large number of specimens of stone implements stored in our museum there may be traced evidences that they possessed some considerable degree of skill in workmanship. It is as fascinating to speculate on these ancient races who inhabited our wide domain of prairie in those olden days, whether nomads, barbarians, or Indians, as is the building of "airy castles in Spain." Their names are lost. Their language is lost. The time of their existence vague. They have vanished into the oblivion of the past.

The questions still come back to us, "Whence came I? Whither am I going?" And again, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" Looking at these queries in the light of nature and from the pages of history, they apply equally to the ancient man of the prairies, whether red or brown, civilized or savage. In answer to these queries, to satisfy our curiosity, to please our indulgence in speculation, and to quicken our spirit for investigation, we are intensely interested in the examination of these specimens of stone implements which are preserved as a part of the property of the society for the general benefit of the people of the state.

It is inconceivable that there ever was a time, however remote, when these prairies did not know of the tread of man. That they left no monuments or ruined castles does not discredit their existence; for neither did the ancient or the modern people who lived as nomads on the deserts of Africa, yet that land has been the home of wandering Moors and Arabs beyond the era of the world's earliest history.

Some of these stone implements are rough in surface, as chipped from the ledges, similar to those which have been found among the human relics of the Cave Dwellers in Europe which followed soon after the age of the glaciers, a time so remote in the world's history that only geologists can speculate as to the degree of their antiquity.

Rough arrowheads and spearheads mark the beginning of the savage man's faculty of invention. It has been supposed that the rough and crude arrowheads and spearheads preceded the use of coarsely chipped and unpolished stone hammers, stone hatchets and stone knives. It may have taken ages or centuries before this advancement in skill or design was acquired by these men of little intellect. This has been shown by archaeological discoveries in Europe, and why is it not equally true in America?

As centuries went by, these ignorant people acquired a sense of beauty and likewise a development in the arts and invention, when the rough stone implements gave way to polished war clubs and polished knives and polished household implements. The men and women began to clothe themselves with skins which had been dressed with bone scrapers and cut and shaped with stone implements, and sewed together with threads of sinew by the use of needles of bone. There came into use household pottery, which in a great measure superseded the stone household utensils. As the people first lived in caves there followed the ambition to have homes above ground, so there came the tepees, wigwams, tents and lodges.

Many specimens of all of the articles and utensils which I have mentioned are found in the museum of our society. They are the historic evidences of development from the earliest primitive man who inhabited our prairies, down to the American Indian of the present day, and perhaps are the best and only evidence we have of the periods of advancement from the prehistoric age to the coming of the white man.

Professor Agassiz said: "America is the first-born among the continents. Hers was the first dry land lifted out of the waters. Hers the first shore washed by the ocean that enveloped all the earth besides." If this be true, evidence may yet be forthcoming that will establish the fact that man is as old as the continent and that our prairies may have been the home of the human race as early as any other place in the world.

So the curios—or many of them—found in our museum may be the possible human relics of a primeval race rather than that of the modern Indian; and this may also prove to be true of many of the chipped and unpolished arrowheads and of the rough and crude stone implements.

If here, as elsewhere, there were races more ancient than has hitherto been supposed, we can no longer look upon the western hemisphere as solitary and unpeopled, unknown and useless to man, until he, grown old in the east, was numerous enough and far enough advanced in intelligence and wants to wander abroad upon the face of the earth in search of a new home.

Who now knows how great a story of the human race may yet be evolved from these thousands of stone implements and stone arrowheads in the possession of the society? They are of great value now, but in the future they may become priceless as the basis for scientific knowledge, and the state should preserve them for the future of mankind, no matter how great the cost.



We are all familiar, in a general way, with the high degree of civilization of the Aztecs at the time of the Spanish conquest. But prior to the Aztecs, Mexico was inhabited by another race of people commonly known as the Toltecs, and who are supposed to have built the great structures which are now known as the ruins of Mitla.

According to Brasseur de Bourbourg, as quoted in Baldwin's *Ancient America*, there is historic data of the existence of the Toltecs as far back as 955 B. C. That same authority assumes that the Toltecs were either the descendants of, or were the successors of the mound builders of the Ohio and Mississippi valleys, and which people inhabited the territory extending westward into what is now Missouri and Iowa. Again we see that it would be no wild conjecture to believe that the Toltecs were visitors to our prairie lands in that same ancient period.

I have been led into this digression because all of us, men, women and children alike, the cultivators of the farms, as well as inhabitants of the cities, the laborers and mechanics, as well as professional and business men, have a natural, inherent and almost unconquerable curiosity to know how far back through the cycle of time the human race may have been the possessors and occupants of the soil which makes up the acreage of the state of Nebraska.

Many white men and many historical writers have accepted as a truth the saying that the Indians were a degraded, brutal race of savages, whom it was the will of God should perish at the approach of civilization.

Bishop Whipple more correctly stated the truth when he said: "The North American Indian is the noblest type of a heathen man on the earth. He recognizes a great spirit. He believes in immortality; he has a quick intellect; he is a clear thinker; he is brave and fearless, and until betrayed he is true to his plighted faith. He has a passionate love for his children, and counts it joy to die for his people."



Who has ever gazed upon a chiseled marble, or bronze figure of an Indian chieftain and did not recognize in the features and physique a remarkable strength of will and great force of character? Who was not impressed with its dignity in expression and commanding presence? The remaining tribes are but remnants, in many cases degraded remnants of a fast fading and disappearing race of people who were the original owners and possessors of this entire country.

A writer of some merit, in describing the prairies as they extend westward from the Missouri river toward the mountains, said there was a time when they were under a mantle of idle silence, when these plains were treeless and waterless, when dead epochs might haunt them, and that in that bit of the early world they were "earth's virgin spaces."

"Against this sweeping background the Indian loomed, ruler of a kingdom whose borders faded into the sky. He stood, a blanketed figure, watching the flight of birds across the blue; he rode, a painted savage, where the cloud-shadows blotted the plain and the smoke of his lodge rose over the curve of the earth. Here tribe had fought with tribe; old scores had been wiped out till the grass was damp with blood; wars of extermination had raged. Here the migrating villagers made a moving streak of color like a bright patch on a map where there were no boundaries, no mountains, and but one gleaming thread of water. In the quietness of evening the pointed tops of the tepees shone dark against the sky, the blur of smoke tarnishing the glow in the West. When the darkness came the stars shone on this spot of life in the wilderness, circled with the howling of wolves."

The passing away of the red man presents a pathetic incident in the annals of time. His language will soon be lost, never to be spoken again. His history in his untutored age was not preserved and can never be written. In the museum of our society there is collected and arranged everything of interest that it has been possible to obtain relating to our native Indian tribes, of their curios, of their

relics, of their implements, of their utensils, of their fabrics, of their habits, of their manner of dress, of their domestic life and of their historical traditions.

To-day archaeologists and ethnologists are seeking with diligence to recover and preserve for our general information everything that it is possible to discover of other races of people who inhabited the earth in the centuries of the dim past, of races with whom the American people sustain no kinship or direct relationship. Do we not owe a greater obligation to the memory of the Indian tribes who were once the owners and the possessors of these lands, the inhabitants of the prairies which now are ours? That which was theirs has become our rich inheritance. We have borrowed the names of these Indian tribes and bestowed them upon our counties and towns and cities. Yet we seldom stop in the hurry of our march in business progress to give a thought to their existence or to erect memorials in their memory.

It would be highly creditable to the citizens of Pawnee county if they should cause to be erected in the public square of Pawnee City a monument in memory of Pita Lesharu, who was a head chief of the Pawnee Indians. It should represent him as he was in life, with his commanding presence, his expressive features and dressed in his most elaborate costume, for he was a man who delighted in his personal appearance. The figure should stand upon a high pedestal, and drooping down behind him the favorite eagle feathers, a part of his head-dress, which was the tribal mark of his people. As he was the white man's friend, there should be carved on granite base the words frequently spoken by him: "The White Man I Love."

In the museum of our society there are richly embroidered garments made from buffalo skins, decorated with beads and porcupine quills and richly ornamented with colored paintings. These garments would now be more

expensive to make, or to purchase, than the modern ball gown from a Parisian model house, yet these gowns were worn by the wife and daughter of the Ogalala Sioux chieftain, Red Cloud. Why should not Sioux county, which takes the name of his tribe, erect a statue of monumental size in memory of that great historic war chieftain, or, failing that, to erect a memorial to Spotted Tail, the hereditary chief of the Brulé, who General Crook, in 1876, crowned "King of the Sioux?"

Cheyenne county, to keep in remembrance the fact that its name is borrowed from an Indian tribe, should erect some proper memorial in memory of Chief Wolf Robe of the Cheyenne. The town of Arapaho should have a memorial to Chief Red Bear. The citizens of Otoe county should erect in its chief city a monument that would be typical of the chieftains of the Otoe tribe of Indians.

Lastly, but not least of all, does not the city of Omaha owe it to herself, in generous recognition of the natural pride her citizens feel in her borrowed name, to erect on some prominent site a heroic sized bronze equestrian statue of Wazhinga Saba (Black Bird), the earliest historic chieftain of the Omaha? This statue should represent him as he frequently appeared in life and as he was buried by directions which he had given to his faithful followers, sitting on his favorite war horse, with one hand uplifted shading his eyes, gazing out toward the waters of the Missouri river watching for the coming of the white men.

In the rooms of the society are diaries and journals of the earliest pioneers of Nebraska, and hundreds of articles which were used by these early settlers. There are tools that were used in the building of the first schoolhouses. There are parts of lumber from the earliest cabins. There are household utensils that were used in adobe homes upon the prairie. There are portraits of distinguished pioneers in pastel, crayon, and oil. In this museum is a collection of



materials which give us a better history of the pioneers than has ever been written regarding them. The state owes a duty to the memory of its pioneers not only to maintain, but to enlarge this collection. In later ages it will be conceded that these pioneers were to Nebraska what the pilgrim fathers were to New England and what the cavaliers were to Virginia.

They were a daring and intrepid class of men who took possession of these prairies from the Missouri river to the mountains. In their footsteps have followed the vast tide of emigration which has built up our cities, which has established our schools and colleges and universities and given us a population of more than a million and a quarter of people. The state of Nebraska owes it to itself to preserve in the archives of the Historical Society every record of the adventures and of the conquests of these pioneers upon the prairies and the uplands of our state.

"The call of the West was a siren song in the ears of these pioneers. Their forefathers had moved from the old countries across the seas, from the elm-shaded towns of New England, from the unkempt villages that advanced into the virgin lands by the Great Lakes, from the peace and plenty of the splendid South. Year by year they had pushed the frontier westward, pricked onward by a ceaseless unrest, 'the old land hunger' that never was appeased. The forests rang to the stroke of their ax. The slow, untroubled rivers of the wilderness parted to the plowing wheels of their unwieldy wagons. Their voices went before them into places where nature has kept unbroken her vast and ponderous silence."

These pioneers changed this immense region from its desolation and barrenness to a land where is now heard the voice of human gladness. Their conquest was the conquest of the virgin soil of the prairies, and their political achievement was the laying of the foundations of a new state.

Patriotism is the life and support of our nation, and without history we would not have patriotism, for patriotism

has its birthright in the spirit of history. It is a sentiment which has its inception in a reverence for the old historic beginnings. Blot from memory the historic knowledge of the past and we would not know the meaning of the word patriotism.

In the museum there is a collection of objects, relics and curios, each one of which is a silent messenger telling a story of the revolutionary period, as Homer sang in song the siege of Troy in the lines of the Iliad. Perry's battle on Lake Erie is one of the most vivid historic events in the war of 1812. In the museum is a drum that was in that battle, and its martial music may have encouraged the men as the conflict went on to its ultimate victory.

Volumes have been written about the hardships and travels of the emigrants crossing the prairies as they threaded their way westward across the plains and along the banks of the Platte river. The waving of the stars and stripes from the flag-staff at Fort Kearny was the most cheerful sight that came to the visions of the tired men and women as they traveled onward toward Oregon. In the museum is a part of that old flagstaff.

The relics of the civil war which are collected in the museum must appeal to the pride of every Grand Army man and deeply touch the sympathies of all our citizens who had friends or relatives in that military service. In the museum there is the original roster of the First Nebraska volunteers. There is a flag carried by the Nebraska troops in their first battles of the civil war. There are samples of uniforms and firearms. There are swords which were carried by distinguished Nebraska commanders in the civil war. There hangs in a case a sword worn by that eminent Nebraska citizen, who was at one time governor, at one time United States senator, a statesman, and a soldier, Major General John M. Thayer.

There is a piece of a tree taken from the battle-field of Chickamauga, filled with gunshot and pieces of shell. To the old soldier of Chickamauga it tells the story of that wonderful battle in which about one hundred thousand soldiers were engaged and in which the loss was about thirty-five thousand. It was of this battle that General Hill of the Confederate army said: "But it seems to me that the elan of the southern soldier was never seen after Chickamauga. The brilliant dash which had distinguished him was gone forever. He was too intelligent not to know that the cutting in two of Georgia meant death to all his hopes. He fought stoutly to the last, but, after Chickamauga, with the sullenness of despair and without the enthusiasm of hope." If that piece of tree in the museum could rise up and talk, it could tell such a thrilling story of the fierceness of the battle, and of the bravery and daring of the men of both the blue and the gray, that would surpass anything that has ever been written of the history of that battle and which would make material for a memorial day address superior to the speech of any orator.

These military and patriotic relics stimulate our interest and sharpen our recollection of the historical times with which they are associated. They intensify and accentuate the intellectual and spiritual growth of our people, just as sculpture and art are the culmination of historical sequences.

There are hundreds of autograph letters from the times of Charles I of England to the expedition of Lewis and Clark, and down to the life of our own most distinguished citizens. They bring to us messages through years of time and across boundless space. They excel the Marconi system; for they do more than repeat words and deliver messages. They bring back to memory all that we have ever heard and all that we have ever read of the person whose hand penned the signature. As we look at the letter



it seems as if we could hear the voice of the writer speak to us. As we study the writing we can see the man step out of the misty past and walk into our presence, a living, moving being.

In the basement of the new building (for want of a better place to exhibit them) are a thousand specimens of Nebraska birds and animals. There are beavers cutting down trees to build dams across the creeks and rivers, exhibiting a degree of skill and judgment that is almost human. There are muskrats building their winter houses. There are wild game, and cranes, and eagles, and a rare specimen of the blue heron. There are many tiny warblers, dressed in a hundred brilliant colors, which chirp and twitter confidently overhead. There are sandpipers bowing and teetering in the friendliest manner. There is the song sparrow, which sings happily through sunshine and through rain, sometimes mentioned as the winged spirit of cheerfulness and contentment and whose songs are bubbling over with irrepressible glee. There is the blue jay, which sits high up in the withered cottonwood tree calling to its mate in a tone of affected sweetness. And there is the kingfisher, with his ruffled crest, which sits in solitary pride on the end of a branch of a tree. There is the robin with its white flecked throat and ruddy sienna breast, and a sparkle in its eye as it pours forth its whole soul in sweet cheery melody. There are many tiny, ruby-crowned brilliant birds that twitter among the trees, breaking occasionally into reckless song fantasia. There are garrulous beautiful tree sparrows, and the noisy blue jay, and woodpeckers with their crimson crests.

There are more than four hundred varieties of birds found within the state which furnish music in the morning hours. There is the bluebird with cerulean plumes, of which Poet Rexford broke into rhapsody:

“Winged lute that we call a bluebird, you blend in a silver strain

The sound of the laughing waters, the patter of spring’s sweet rain,

The voice of the winds, the sunshine, and fragrance of blossoming things;

Ah, you are an April poem that God has dowered with wings.”

When walking through our newly grown Nebraska woodlands in the springtime, there may always be heard the tinkle or spray of bell-like tones coming down from the branches where the singers are poised unseen, which is “like walking through a shower of melody.” And then there are the migrating birds with taste and fancy like our human travelers that spend their winters in the warm climates of the South. There are those that fly away to the high altitudes of the mountains, and to the colder regions of the North to escape the summer’s hot sunshine. While some are gone upon their long journeys, others come to visit with us.

“ ’Tis always morning somewhere, and above  
The awakened continents, from shore to shore,  
Somewhere the birds are singing evermore.”

The nations of Europe collect their jewels and precious works of art and place them in fireproof permanent structures where not only their own people but the visitors of the world may have the pleasure of seeing them. The vast quantity of curios and relics and other materials in the possession of our society are the “jewels and precious works of art” of our state. Nebraska should do what her sister states are doing, erect a memorial hall and state historical building, which should be commodious enough to answer all requirements, and of an architectural design which should be pleasing to the sight and a credit to the people.

It was said of the citizens of Athens in the days of their highest intellectual attainments, that they could pass

judgment upon the odes of Pindar, the tragedies of Sophocles, and the philosophy of Plato, because they had been privileged in childhood to study the history of Greece and to look upon the paintings of their greatest artists, which were hung upon the walls, and the exquisite sculpture work of Phidias which stood in the corridors of the Parthenon. So I would have placed in this Nebraska state historical building statues of the prominent men who have made Nebraska history. I would have in its corridors and on its walls works of art. I would have in its architecture imposing grandeur, and in its decorations, those things that appeal to the cultured taste of Nebraska people.

# HISTORICAL SKETCH OF SOUTHWESTERN NEBRASKA

By JOHN F. CORDEAL

[Paper read at the annual meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society, January 10, 1912.]

It is my purpose to briefly outline the history of southwestern Nebraska; and, as history is defined to be the true story of that which is known to have occurred, I shall read what I have to say so that if I shall say what is not true, I will not be in a position to equivocate when those who are better informed than I am attempt to correct my errors. In recounting the events of the past, our highest aim should be accuracy, and, as far as possible, I have gathered my material from original sources.

If, at times, I stray beyond the boundaries of Nebraska, I do so merely because it seems necessary to an adequate comprehension of the subject. When some of the events of which I shall speak happened there was no Nebraska; when a part of them happened there was not even a United States; and, in any event, our state boundaries are but arbitrary lines. Save these incidental digressions, my story shall be confined to events which occurred, for the most part, in the valley of the Republican river, west of the one hundredth meridian.

## CORONADO

If Coronado is correct in his assumption that in 1541 he crossed the fortieth parallel of latitude, then he was the first white man to set foot upon the soil of Nebraska. Whether he did or not, we do not know. We have his asser-



tion for it that he was here<sup>1</sup>; but modern authority is not agreed on the question, and as we are dealing with facts, the doubt that has been raised should render us cautious about accepting the explorer's uncorroborated statement. Perhaps future investigations will clear away our uncertainties. The journey of Coronado and his band, beginning in Mexico and terminating somewhere on the trans-Missouri plains and consuming nearly two years of time, is without parallel in the annals of exploration. We cannot even form any conception of the difficulties that it involved; and, despite the motives that animated the leader and his followers, we are bound to yield them the tribute of our respect. If, as

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<sup>1</sup> Coronado said that Quivira, "Where I have reached it, is in the 40th degree"; but F. W. Hodge, of the Bureau of American Ethnology, an acknowledged authority on the Coronado expedition, points out that the common error in determining latitude in the sixteenth century was about two degrees. According to Hodge, Quivira where Coronado said he reached it was in fact in the 38th degree.

The following letter to the editor, dated at Washington, February 5, 1914, throws light on this interesting, though insoluble, and so fortunately, not very important question:

"Answering your letter of February 2 I beg leave to say that the determination of the fact that the Spanish explorers were almost invariably two degrees out of the way in estimating latitudes was reached after the comparison of various early narrations and maps. I cannot explain why the error should have been so persistent, except, of course, that it resulted from the crude means at the disposal of the early explorers, although this would hardly account for the almost uniform exaggeration of two degrees.

"Regarding my statement as to the trend of the evidence that Coronado did not enter Nebraska, you will observe from the chronicles of the expedition, that, after reaching Quivira, Coronado sent parties in various directions, one or more of which may have entered Nebraska, but there is no positive assertion that Harahey was visited, although Tatarrash (Tatar-rax) was sent for by Coronado and visited the latter.

"I have found no reason to change my views on the above points since writing the account of Coronado's route in Brower's 'Harahey.' I should have been glad if the white man's history of Nebraska could have been traced definitely to 1541, but the only basis for this is the statement of the visit of the Harahey (Pawnee) Chief Tatarrash to Coronado while he was apparently in Kansas.

Yours very truly,

F. W. HODGE,  
Ethnologist-in-Charge."—(ED.)

has been said, Coronado is right, and recent critics are wrong, then southwestern Nebraska was known to white men within a half century after the discovery of America, sixty-six years before the settlement of Jamestown, sixty-eight years before the Half Moon sailed up the Hudson river, and eighty years before the pilgrim fathers landed on Plymouth Rock.

#### MALLET BROTHERS

In 1739, or nearly two centuries after Coronado's expedition had penetrated to the heart of the North American continent, the Mallet brothers, two French explorers, attempted to reach Santa Fe by way of the Missouri and the Platte rivers. Realizing when they reached the forks of the Platte river that further pursuit of their course would not take them to their destination, they started in a southwesterly direction across the prairies, following, it is said, a more or less well defined trail that had been made by the Indian tribes in their migrations northward and southward. They named the streams and described the country through which they passed with some minuteness. When the opportunity comes to give closer attention to their records perhaps we may be able to determine, with reasonable certainty, the route they followed. That their way took them across the country embraced within the limits of this sketch, there can be little doubt; so that if it shall be decided, eventually, that southwestern Nebraska was not visited by Coronado, we have left the important fact that this section of the state was seen by white men before the revolutionary war.<sup>2</sup>

#### FREMONT

Again a century elapsed before civilized men, save, possibly, French Canadian trappers, came to this region.

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<sup>2</sup> As the writer hints, knowledge of this expedition is uncertain and gauzy—ED.



In 1842 John C. Fremont followed the Platte river to its sources. In 1843 he started with a large party to ascend the Kansas river. Becoming impatient at the slow progress of his expedition, he pushed ahead with a small detachment. Taking a northwesterly direction, he crossed what is now the boundary line between Kansas and Nebraska, a few miles east of the southwest corner of this state. On the evening of the 25th of June he camped a short distance from the main Republican on a little creek, doubtless the Driftwood. Shortly after leaving the encampment, on the morning of the 26th, he remarks that the nature of the country had entirely changed. Instead of the smooth, high ridges, over which they had been traveling, sand-hills swelled around them, and vegetation peculiar to a sandy soil appeared.

When they reached the Republican river, they found that here its shallow waters flowed over a sandy bed between treeless banks, beyond which, to the horizon, rolled the sand-hills, clad with billowing grasses, and beautiful with flowers. Here the yucca, the cactus, the sagebrush and the poppy grew. Among the hills, tiny brooks, fed by never failing springs, threaded their way. Except for isolated groves that the fires had left, the land was untimbered. In places out-croppings of magnesia gave to limited areas an aspect almost Alpine. In places, where trampling hoofs had worn the grass, the wind had blown the sand away, leaving great basins, in which stood masses of clay that had been sculptured into fantastic forms. Around the ponds, formed by the rains, they found excellent pasture for their horses. Buffaloes in countless numbers were scattered over the country.

For two or three days Fremont and his men traveled in Nebraska territory. Crossing the line into what is now Colorado, they continued their journey, finally reaching the Platte river.

## THE INDIAN TRIBES

None of these explorers mentions the Indians, and yet we know the Indians must, at times, have frequented this country in large numbers, and that their villages were scattered along the streams. The Pawnee, who may be called the aboriginal Nebraskans, were divided into two clans, called the Grand Pawnee and the Republican Pawnee, the habitat of the latter being the Republican valley. The Sioux occupied western Nebraska north of the North Platte. The southwestern section of the state, including Dundy and Chase counties, together with the high plains of eastern Colorado, were occupied by the Arapaho and the Cheyenne, who, from a time antedating the coming of the white men, held the headwaters of the Republican and its largest western tributary, the Frenchman, against the aggressions of all other tribes. While we lack detailed information in regard to the encounters that unquestionably took place in this locality among the natives, we know this borderland was the scene of many conflicts; that incursions were made by war parties from each tribe into the territory claimed by the others; and that these invasions were repelled.

No one who is familiar with the grassy, stream-threaded valleys of southwestern Nebraska can wonder that they were guarded jealously by the people who asserted possessory rights over them. They were the haunts of the wild game that swarmed on the prairies, which made them of value to a people who secured their living from the land. Here it was the buffaloes made their last stand, and here to-day antelopes may sometimes be found grazing in the meadows.

Before the advent of railroads, southwestern Nebraska was out of the usual course of travel. The Oregon and California trails to the north and the Smoky Hill route to

the south were the great highways between east and west, while the Republican valley, being shunned by white men, was a refuge for the Indians when they were too closely pressed by the troops. This battle ground of the people who preceded us in its occupancy is strewn with the implements of peace and war. After every rain, arrowheads may be found in the cultivated fields, and the winds uncover articles once used by members of a race that is gone. What stories these relics might tell if they but had the faculty of speech!

#### BATTLE OF AUGUST 6, 1860

For several years prior to the beginning of the civil war, bands of Kiowa and Comanche Indians had been ranging over the plains, slaughtering cattle, stealing horses, burning ranches and killing men. In the summer of 1860 the government, determined to put an end to these atrocities, sent a detachment of troops, under the command of Captain Sturgis, in pursuit of the savages. The campaign, which necessitated a march from south to north across the state of Kansas, terminated on the 6th day of August, 1860, in an engagement at a place that has not yet been, if indeed, it can ever be, more definitely located than "near the Republican fork," north of Beaver creek.

Six companies of troops participated, and a number of Indian scouts accompanied the soldiers. The command started from the Arkansas river July 28th, and all but overtook the Indians on the morning of August 3d, on the banks of the Solomon river, in Kansas. Here they found large quantities of buffalo meat and hides and a number of lodge poles, which had been abandoned by the Indians in their hurried flight. The troops, wearied with a march of fifty miles in the preceding twenty-four hours, camped for the day and started north again about dark. Several times during the next two days they came upon small bands of Indians, with whom they skirmished; but they did not



encounter the main body of the savages until the morning of the 6th. Soon after the troops left the camp on Beaver creek, a party of thirty or forty Indians appeared about a mile ahead of them. Lieutenant Fish was detailed with twenty men, on picked horses, to overtake the Indians if possible, and Lieutenant Ingraham followed with the advanced guard, with orders to keep in sight of Fish and go to his support if necessary.

The pursuit was conducted with great energy, but after having been continued for eight miles, over a country intersected by ravines, no gain had been made upon the savages. About eleven o'clock in the morning the troops found it necessary to cross a small stream which they had been following; and, owing to the density of the timber along this stream and the belief that a large body of Indians was nearby, every precaution was taken, in crossing the wagons, to guard against surprise. Lieutenant Ingraham was ordered to reconnoiter the timber in the vicinity of the crossing, Lieutenant Stockton deployed his company to the front, as skirmishers, and the troopers stood ready to mount at the word of command. During the crossing of the creek, the Indian scouts with the troops became entangled with the hostile Indians, and Lieutenant Stockton went to their assistance.

The number of Indians rapidly increased. A level plain, crossed by ravines, lay in front of the troops, and behind them was the timbered stream. Beyond the plain a range of low hills stretched parallel with the valley. From every draw and pocket the Indians, from six hundred to eight hundred in number, swarmed into the plain, apparently in a flank movement, while Captain Carr intended to attack in front. The entire command galloped forward, but before it reached the Indians they began to give way. Though the soldiers put their jaded horses to their topmost speed, the fresh ponies of the Indians were

able to gain on their pursuers, though followed for fifteen miles. The long-range arms of the soldiers were, however, effective. The Indians crossed the Republican river and scattered among the hills on the north side, and further pursuit was impracticable. Twenty-nine of them were killed, and an unknown number were wounded in the encounter. No fatalities were reported by their antagonists.<sup>3</sup>

#### THE INDIAN WAR OF 1865

During the war of the rebellion, the Indians, taking advantage of the diversion of the small garrisons of the plains to the South, and incited to hostility by Confederate sympathizers, were very troublesome on the plains of Nebraska. To protect the frontier and the "pilgrims," as the emigrants were called, detachments of soldiers were stationed at a number of places along the overland trails. Forts were established in the Platte valley, at intervals of a few miles, and squads of soldiers patrolled the most frequented routes of travel. Notwithstanding these precautions, however, the Indians committed many depredations on outlying ranches and the smaller parties of travelers.

On the 29th day of November, 1864, occurred what has been termed the Chivington massacre, at Sand Creek, Colorado, in which the troops won a signal victory over the Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians.<sup>4</sup> It was believed that

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<sup>3</sup> A full account of this expedition by its commander, Captain S. D. Sturgis, of the First cavalry, dated Fort Kearny, August 12, 1860, is published in the report of the secretary of war for 1860—Senate Documents 2d Session 36th Congress, v. 2, p. 19. It appears that the boggy stream the command crossed on the day of the battle was a branch of Whelan's (Beaver) Creek. The fatalities of the attacking force were two friendly Indians killed, three officers wounded, and one missing. Companies A, B, C, D, E, and I composed the command. The fact that the Indians were pursued fifteen miles is some indication that the battle-field is in the southwesterly part of Red Willow county, since the Beaver and the Republican approach each other too closely east of that vicinity to fit the description.—ED.

<sup>4</sup> This shocking tragedy of the great Indian war which was precipitated in 1864 occurred about one hundred and seventy-five miles southeast of



this punishment would put a stop to further hostilities by these two tribes; but on the 7th of January, 1865, the Indians, to the number of more than one thousand, appeared suddenly before Fort Julesburg.<sup>5</sup> In the battle that ensued, which continued for several hours, fourteen of the soldiers were killed, while the Indians are known to have lost at least fifty-six. After this engagement, the Indians disappeared from the vicinity of Fort Julesburg, and as it was reported they had gone down into the Republican valley

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Denver. It was denounced in severest language by officers of the department of the interior. N. G. Taylor, member of a special commission appointed to investigate the Indian troubles, called it, in his report, "the horrible Sand Creek massacre," and a "cold-blooded butchery of women and children, disarmed warriors and old men"; and General John B. Sanborn, member of a commission appointed by the president of the United States February 18, 1867, to investigate the causes of the incessant Indian hostilities, denounced the Sand Creek butchery still more severely. He said that the commanding officer of the post [Fort Lyon] guaranteed them protection, designated a place for them to encamp on Sand Creek while the chiefs and young men were absent to bring in the hostiles and procure food for their people, and gave them a United States flag to indicate their friendship and insure their protection. While they were thus encamped and at a moment of their feeling of greatest security, United States troops were seen approaching, presumed by them to be on a friendly mission. White Antelope, who had made himself a servant of the whites on the plains, stepped out apparently to greet and welcome the troops, but was shot down like a dog and the massacre of women and children commenced. "Some twelve old men and about one hundred and fifty women and children were put to death by the troops. Helpless infancy and decrepit age shared the same fate. Women were scalped, disemboweled, and unseemly parts cut from their places and borne off on the pommels and saddles or bridles of horses." (These denunciations were copied from my "History of the Indian War on the Plains from 1864 to Final Peace," pages 20 and 54, and footnote 2, ms. Nebraska State Historical Society.)

The troops engaged in the massacre comprised three companies of the First regiment Colorado cavalry and a detachment of the Third regiment Colorado cavalry, commanded by John M. Chivington, colonel of the First Colorado. (History of Nebraska, v. 2, p. 188, note.)—ED.

<sup>5</sup> Though often called Fort Julesburg, this post was named Fort Sedgwick by order of the war department, September 27th, 1864, immediately after its construction. See footnote 1 of *Adventures On The Plains 1865-67*, this volume.—ED.

in southwestern Nebraska, those in authority determined to pursue them.

Accordingly an expedition was fitted out, under the command of General Mitchell, which started from Fort Cottonwood<sup>6</sup> down what was termed the "Trader's Trail" on the 16th day of January, 1865. They went in a southwesterly direction until they reached the Kansas-Nebraska boundary, not far from the southwestern corner of the state, from which point part of the detachment continued for fifty miles down into Kansas. Returning to the Republican river, they followed that stream as far east as the mouth of the Medicine, when they turned north, reaching Fort Cottonwood on the 26th day of January.

The sufferings of the men in this winter campaign of twelve days were almost unendurable. The weather was extremely cold, at one time the mercury registering twenty degrees below zero. The men had no shelter but their tents, and many nights they were compelled to sit by their camp fires to keep from freezing. We, who know the country as it is to-day, can scarcely realize what suffering such an adventure entailed. From morning till night the troopers rode over the plain in search of an elusive foe, whose presence they could feel but could not see, not knowing at what instant a savage and relentless horde might swoop down upon them. The prairies at this season are overpowering in their desolation. The stream, from bank to bank, is a sheet of ice. Through the leafless branches of the trees that fringe the river the winter winds wail dismally, after dark, to the accompaniment of that dolefullest of sounds—the coyote's cry. The hills that bound the valley are

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<sup>6</sup> According to Eugene Ware's story of the expedition in "The Indian War of 1864," pp. 454 and 458, it went from Fort Cottonwood to Jack Morrow's ranch, ten miles west, on the evening of the 15th and started from Morrow's, southwesterly, up Trader's Trail, on the 16th as the author says.—ED.

blanketed with snow which, when the sunlight falls upon them, accentuates their convolutions. At night the stars sparkle like diamonds in the frosty air. The blazing camp fire, around which the shivering soldiers huddled, intensified the surrounding gloom. Essential as was the warmth to their very being, it was still a signal that might have been read for miles and invited destruction.

During the scout, as it was called, the soldiers often saw in the distance single Indians scuttling over the prairie, but seldom more than one at a time, although there were trails, made by the dragging lodge poles, leading in every direction. It did not matter that the troops feared to separate to follow these several trails, for upon them the capture or killing of the lone wanderers would have served no good purpose. One night a band of Indians rushed through the camp, discharging guns, breaking tent ropes, and pulling up pegs; but they were gone—swallowed by the darkness—before the soldiers recovered from their surprise.

#### GENERAL CARR'S BATTLE WITH SIOUX

(JUNE, 1869)

After the suppression of the rebellion, the trans-Missouri plains began to fill with settlers. A pressing Indian question arose. The policy of removing the Indians to reservations as rapidly as the extension of civilization required was adopted, but for a time the task of controlling them seemed impracticable, and, despite aggressive military measures, the prairies became infested with predatory bands of savages who made frequent raids upon the defenseless settlers, stealing horses, killing cattle, murdering men, and carrying women into captivity.

The mild climate and abundant game of the Republican valley attracted the Indians, and several bands of Sioux and Pawnee established themselves there. In 1868, when a part



of the Indians went to the reservations set apart for all of these roving bands, certain of them, under the leadership of Pawnee Killer, The Whistler, Tall Bull, and Little Wound refused to go. They were joined by straggling members of the Cheyenne tribe, which had been driven south in the winter of that year.

In June, 1869, an expedition commanded by Major General E. A. Carr, of the Fifth cavalry, marched into the Republican valley to clear it of the marauding outlaws. The command comprised eight companies of regular cavalry, and three companies of Pawnee scouts under Major Frank North. Striking a promising trail they followed for two days along the Republican and then turned north. After a pursuit of twenty miles in that direction on the last day, the savages were overtaken on the headwaters of the Republican. After a desperate battle of several hours, the Indians, comprising Sioux and "Dog-soldiers," renegades from various tribes, led by Tall Bull, a Cheyenne, were completely routed. Fifty-two of them, including Tall Bull, were killed. One of two white women, captured by these Indians some time before on the Saline river in Kansas, was rescued by the soldiers, but the other was killed by her captors during the progress of the battle. Nine hundred dollars, nearly all of a sum of money found in the camp, was given to the liberated woman. More than one hundred mules, three hundred horses and colts, a large quantity of powder, and about five tons of dried buffalo meat were captured. The mules and horses were distributed among the soldiers and scouts.<sup>7</sup>

It was hoped that this chastisement would have a salutary effect, but instead it thoroughly aroused the

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<sup>7</sup> The expedition comprised eight companies of the Fifth cavalry and three of Pawnee scouts—fifty in each company. It started from Fort McPherson on the 9th of June. On Sunday, July 11, the command marched northward twenty miles and surprised the Indians at their village in the

hostility of the Indians. A few weeks after this battle the Buck party was wiped out of existence, and the Daugherty party miraculously escaped a like fate. However, this

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northwest corner of Colorado. General Carr called the battle-field Summit Springs because a fine spring of water was found on an adjacent sand-hill.

The names of the two captured women were Mrs. Susannah Alderdice and Mrs. Wiechel. Tall Bull was keeping them as his wives and shot them both rather than to risk their being rescued. The soldiers and scouts captured about fifteen hundred dollars in gold, nine hundred dollars of which was given up and presented to Mrs. Wiechel.

Under date of January 26, 1914, the adjutant general of the United States army (George Andrews) advises me that a pamphlet entitled "Record of Engagements with Hostile Indians within the Military Division of the Missouri from 1868 to 1882," compiled at the headquarters of that division in 1882, contains the following: "July 11 (1869), the main village was completely surprised on 'Summit Springs,' a small tributary of the South Platte, in Colorado. Seven troops of the Fifth cavalry and three companies of mounted Pawnee scouts charged the village which, with its contents, was captured and burned. Fifty-two Indians were killed, an unknown number wounded, and seventeen captured, among the killed being 'Tall Bull,' the chief of the band. Two hundred and seventy-four horses, one hundred and forty-four mules, quantities of arms and ammunition and about \$1,500 in United States money were among the most important items of the extensive captures. So perfect was the surprise and so swift the charge over a distance of several miles, that the Indians could do little but spring upon their ponies and fly, and the casualties to the troops were only one soldier wounded, one horse shot, and twelve horses killed by the hot and exhaustive charge. \* \* \* "

The adjutant general adds: "It appears from the official records that General Carr left Fort McPherson, Nebr., June 9, 1869, with the organizations that fought the engagement at Summit Springs. Tall Bull was chief of a tribe of Cheyenne Indians."

General C. C. Augur, commander of the department of the Platte, in his report—dated October 23, 1869—to the commander of the Military Division of the Missouri, said:

"More than a year ago, when 'Spotted Tail' went to the reservation set apart for all these bands, certain of them, under the leadership of Pawnee Killer, The Whistler, Tall Bull, Little Wound, and others, refused to go."

"When the Cheyennes were driven south last winter, Tall Bull and a few other prominent head soldiers joined these bands on the Republican, and it is these irregular and straggling bands that have committed all the depredations in Northern Kansas and Southern Nebraska during the past year. It was determined, therefore, to act aggressively upon these bands, and to endeavor to drive them from this country and force them to their reservations. The assignment of the Fifth cavalry to my department fortunately gave me the means of doing this, and at the same time looking after other exposed points in the department. With this view, the expedi-



seems to be the last time that the Indians resisted the military in this part of Nebraska. Though both the Sioux and the Pawnee hunted here for three or four years afterwards,<sup>8</sup> the settlers suffered no serious losses, except by the famous Cheyenne raid of 1878.

tion commanded by Brevet Major General E. A. Carr, major Fifth Cavalry, was organized and started into the Republican country early in June." (Report of the Secretary of War, 2d Sess. 41st Cong., p. 71.)

Major Frank North commanded the Pawnee scouts in the Summit Springs campaign; and he has left a full account of the battle in the 12th chapter of his memoirs, "A Quarter of a Century on the Frontier." He states that the expedition struck the Republican "near the mouth of Dog Creek." The context indicates that the creek in question was the Prairie Dog. The next incident related occurred while the command was in camp "near the mouth of Turkey Creek". "A few days after the command had left this camp" it was "scouting along the Beaver and Prairie Dog creeks;" and soon after, having moved westward up the Republican, it camped on the Black Tail Deer Fork. One of the rather numerous Turkey creeks of this part of Nebraska enters the Republican near the eastern boundary of Furnas county, at a point about a day's march west of the mouth of the Prairie Dog, and Deer creek enters the Republican about sixteen miles miles farther west. Mr. Cordeal, who has lived in Red Willow county many years, writes that he cannot find any trace of an affluent of the Republican called Dog creek in that part of the state. So it seems that the expedition did not march directly south to the Republican, but southwest instead. A Colton map published in the same year shows a Beaver creek entering the Medicine creek in Frontier county, and a later map shows another entering the Republican from the south in range 24 west; but it is not likely that either of these streams was referred to in the reports of General Carr's campaign.

On the third of August, 1869, General C. C. Augur, commander of the department of the Platte, issued an order—number 48—highly commending General Carr and his command for their conduct in the campaign in which he specially mentions Corporal John Kyle of Company M and Sergeant Mad Bear of the Pawnee scouts for bravery and gallant conduct. (Major North's memoirs, p. 146.)

The Nebraska legislature, at its sixth session, on the 23d of February, 1870, passed a resolution of thanks for General Carr, Major North and their command for their services in the campaign, "by which the people of the state were freed from the ravages of merciless savages." (Laws of Nebraska 1870-71, p. 50.)—ED.

<sup>8</sup> The famous treaty of April 29, 1868, with the Sioux, acknowledged their right to hunt along the Republican river. They relinquished the right in the treaty of June 23, 1875. (Eighteenth Report Bureau of American Ethnology, pt. 2, p. 882.) Such hunting as the Pawnee may have done in the same territory until they were removed from their reservation to Indian Territory in 1876, was by sufferance and without legal right.—ED.

## MASSACRE OF THE BUCK SURVEYING PARTY

The disappearance of the Buck surveying party in the summer of 1869 is one of the mysteries of the plains. The party, consisting of twelve men, under the leadership of Nelson Buck, started from Fort Kearny for the Republican country in the latter part of July. Application had been made to the military authorities for arms, but for some reason these were not furnished. After the party had proceeded for some distance, Mr. Buck directed two of its members to return to Fort Kearny and there await fulfillment of his requisition. The others proceeded on their way, and, so far as is known, nothing was seen or heard of them again.

Later in the season, when the continued absence of the men had been noted, it was discovered that none of the lines or corners that were to have been established by Mr. Buck could be found. This fact, coupled with the fact that although his trail had been seen and an empty water-keg found near one of his camps, no trace of the party had been discovered, and that General Duncan, who was out on a scouting expedition, had found two surveyor's tripods in an Indian camp that had been recently raided by him, led to the conviction that the members of the party had been massacred.

Lieutenant Jacob Almy reported the capture, by a detachment of cavalry, on the 26th of September, 1869, of a squaw who told of an encounter between a party of white men and a band of Indians under Pawnee Killer and The Whistler which occurred while the Indians were crossing the Republican river between Frenchman's Fork and Red Willow creek to move over to the Beaver. It seems that four Indians, in advance of the main body of the savages, were attacked by the whites, and that three of the Indians and one white man were killed. The Indians pursued the

aggressors in the direction of the Beaver, took their horses and rations, destroyed two wagons, and killed five of them, the remainder escaping.

The story told by the squaw is corroborated in the account of an inquiry made by an employee of the government who was in charge of the agency to which the Sioux returned after their summer's campaign through the Republican valley. From an interview with Spotted Tail<sup>9</sup> it was gathered that the Indians, some time in the month of August, attacked a party of about twelve surveyors near Beaver creek, and succeeded in killing six. The balance of the party retreated and entrenched themselves. Subsequently the Indians attacked them, but were repulsed with a loss of three killed. Spotted Tail reported that he did not know what became of the other whites, but thought they may have been killed by another band of savages. Another Indian told of the killing of eight whites on the Beaver and the escape of three others, of whose subsequent fate he did not know. This party had one wagon, which was run into the creek. Still another account of the affair is that, while Pawnee Killer's band was crossing the hills south of the mouth of Red Willow creek, on their way to the Beaver, they discovered a party of six white men with a team. A charge was made in which three Indians were killed. The whites finally gained the timber on Beaver

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<sup>9</sup>Spotted Tail, or Sentegaleska, was chief of the Brulé Sioux who were settled at an agency on Beaver creek—now in Sheridan county—in 1874. By virtue of a protest by the state of Nebraska that they were trespassers on her soil, they were removed in 1877. (Laws of Nebraska 1875, p. 338; History of Nebraska, v. 3, p. 369.) The location was also called Camp Sheridan, because a detachment of soldiers was kept there to restrain the Indians who were inclined to hostility. Spotted Tail had the reputation of being so loyal to the whites as almost to imply his disloyalty to his own people; but probably he deserves the benefit of the doubt and to be credited with wise and impartial statesmanship. Dr. George L. Miller, editor of the Omaha Herald, in its weekly issue of September 4, 1874, said: "He is the truest friend of the white man and of peace on these borders that ever lived."—ED.



creek, where they made a stand. The Indians, in the meantime, had increased their force to two hundred warriors. Frequent and desperate charges were made on the white men during the entire afternoon, and about sunset the last of the six was killed and scalped. Pawnee Killer, who led the fight in person, said the whites were very brave, and that many of his warriors were wounded. The three Indians killed were buried in trees on the south side of the Republican, just above the mouth of Red Willow creek.

While these accounts, in some respects, seem irreconcilable, there can be little doubt that they are of the same affair. As the Buck party was the only party of white men in this vicinity at that time, and as all of its members disappeared, we are bound to believe—unless we concede that these stories are pure fabrications—that they were the victims of the tragedy recorded. Search for the bodies was made in the fall of 1869, but without avail. Recent investigation leaves no room for question that the last stand of the whites was made at a place on the banks of Beaver creek, in Red Willow county, but where their bones lie now, no one knows.

#### DAUGHERTY'S BATTLE WITH THE INDIANS

It was probably after the massacre of the Buck party when, on the twenty-first day of August, 1869, W. E. Daugherty, who was in the field with a party of surveyors, had an encounter with the Indians. About six o'clock in the morning a small band of savages dashed into the surveyors' camp, shot one of their horses and stampeded the rest, which, however, were soon recaptured. The whites, realizing that they were in the vicinity of a large body of Indians, decided to go to the nearest place on the Platte river where they could secure arms and ammunition for the purpose of equipping themselves, so as to be prepared to resist an attack. They had not proceeded far until they were sur-

rounded by about one hundred and seventy-five Indians. Knowing them to be hostile, and that it would be useless to try to escape, the surveyors concluded to stop and to make the best defense they could. They turned their horses loose, and while the Indians were pursuing the animals the whites sought to entrench themselves. Daugherty himself has left the following description of the battle:

“As soon as they got the stock they surrounded us and fought us in Indian style all day. Fortunately, none of us was seriously hurt, though one of the men was slightly wounded in the forehead by a glancing shot, and my brother was disabled for duty by the explosion of a cartridge in his face, which blinded him so he could not see for nearly the whole day. We disabled several of their horses and know that we shot twelve Indians, three of whom we know were killed—two of them lay in our sight all day, they not venturing to take them away until dark. Although their bullets rained around us all day like hail, not a man flinched, nor do I think one felt the least despondent. About dark they ceased firing and seemed by their actions to be stationing sentinels in squads at different points, sounding as though the main body was stationed at a point about one hundred and fifty rods southwest of us, in a ravine. About dark we commenced digging with more energy to make them believe we intended to stay there; but at half past nine o'clock we left our little fort by crawling on our bodies about a mile, which we thought extremely dangerous, as the moon shone and it was almost as light as day, and we expected to crawl upon the Indians every moment. But we did not, and as soon as we had left a ridge of land between us and the Indians we skedaddled the best we could and arrived safely at the river the next day. I lost the entire outfit, not excepting anything. My brother and two other men are now out with a party of cavalry helping to rescue a part of our outfit.”

This fight is believed to have taken place in southern Chase or northern Dundy county; but, as has been said, it is not known exactly where it occurred.



## THE ROYAL BUCK EXPEDITION

The incidents that have been recounted have a passing interest, because nothing that has to do with men is without interest; but they left no permanent mark upon the land, and were it not for the fact that we find in the dust-covered volumes of our libraries recital of their occurrence we would not, to-day, know they had happened.

In the fall of 1871 a corporation called the Republican Valley Land Company was organized in Nebraska City for the purpose of exploiting the resources of southwestern Nebraska. Among the incorporators were J. Sterling Morton, whose name is so intimately identified with the early history of eastern Nebraska, and W. W. W. Jones, who afterwards was state superintendent of public instruction. On the ninth day of November, 1871, a party of nine men, including officers and stockholders of the company, started from Nebraska City for the mouth of Red Willow creek. They traveled by railroad as far as Sutton, which was then the terminus of the Burlington and Missouri River Railroad; there they overtook their wagons, which had been sent on ahead to await their coming, and continued the journey in them. At that time the grading for the railroad between Sutton and Fort Kearny was nearly completed, but there were no towns in all that stretch of country. Settlers' cabins were scattered along the way, but beyond the fort few of these, even, were to be seen.

Royal Buck, who was a member of the party and who afterwards settled in the valley, where he resided for a number of years and became an influential citizen, kept a diary<sup>10</sup> in which he described the trip. His story is one of fascinating interest. The weather in the early winter of 1871 was unusually severe. One storm after another swept

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<sup>10</sup> A transcript of this diary is in the library of the Nebraska State Historical Society.—ED.

over the prairies. A tent was the only shelter for the men, while the horses were tied on the lee side of the wagons. A number of hunters were caught in the fearful storms, and the explorers passed many of them eastward bound, loaded with meat. They suffered from the severe cold, as few of them were prepared for it. None had tents, and only a part of them had sufficient food. Mention is made of one party that had nothing to eat but corn and meat and so substituted parched corn for bread. The Buck party gave them a few quarts of beans and sent a pot of coffee to their camp, receiving in return a stock of buffalo meat. In another party there was a man who had been lost on the prairies in the storm and was badly frozen. He had been found accidentally as he was in his last sleep. Once, when storm-bound, for lack of a stove the men filled a camp kettle with coals, and stood, shivering, over it. Two of them extemporized a checker board on the end of a cracker box, and at that game whiled away the hours.

The almost daily program was to arise about four o'clock in the morning, breakfast, feed their horses and be on their way as soon as it was light enough to see. Sometimes they camped at noon for lunch, and sometimes they pushed on till night. Sometimes the weather compelled them to lie by for a few hours. Game was plentiful, and when they were in the western country not a day passed that they did not see buffaloes, deer, elks, antelopes and wild turkeys. On the twenty-second day of November they reached Red Willow creek, and for several days camped on its banks. They selected a site for a town, and every member of the party chose a claim. To show of what stuff these men were made, I quote from the diary:

I take spade and stakes and go out to plant peach pits and bulbs found in my carpet bag and wend my way to selected homestead, select the ground and shovel off the snow spade up a trench about ten feet long, plant in tulip

bulbs and peach pits, and as I cover up the ground again with snow, and as I sit in the snow bank by the side of my planting I involuntarily lift up an audible prayer to my heavenly father to bless the planting—that fruit and flower may bloom together and gladden the hearts of household and friends—that God also will bless the planting of the new town and those who have planted it and that all together may be prospered in all their plannings and that God may be glorified and his Kingdom be built up here on this virgin soil. And as I prayed a little bird lit upon my shoulder and chirped about my head & again rested on my coat as it was spread out on the snow. I am not superstitious—do not believe much in signs and omens, but it did seem that here *was* a significant expression—a promise of good.

The homeward journey was attended with even greater hardships than the outward trip: cold, storms, deep snows made traveling difficult and dangerous. On Sunday, the third of December, an unusually violent storm forced them to seek shelter for the day. At the risk of being tedious I shall quote once more from the diary:

Sunday 3.

We are wakened at 3 o'clock this morning by the blowing of the wind, a regular north wester. It shakes our tent and the boys go out and drive additional stakes—the cooks get out at 5 o'clock and get breakfast and we all get around our camp fire to eat and all shivering and shaking.

The wind blows fearfully and the snow is flying briskly and O! how cold! We feel that we ought to drive 15 miles today, but is it safe? We wait two hours—it gets no better, teamsters say start and we strike tent and pack our baggage and drive a half mile and all say: No farther! turn to the timber. We drive to a cabin for hay and Mr. Ellis & myself seek shelter in it. We find a Wisconsin family by the name of Moss [Morse]. We take our blankets and stay—the wind is blowing and drifting and sifts through the logs and we keep our coats and wrappings on as we sit around the cook stove—green wood! We shake and



shiver as badly as in camp, and it is as hard to keep warm as any place we have been in. Mrs. M. gets supper consisting of fried bacon, corn griddle cakes, coffee, butter, potatoes. The latter we have not had before since we left home. We sit by the stove—our backs to the stove to eat and our fingers are so cold that we can hardly hold our knives and forks, but we eat a hearty meal and feel warmer. Our hostess is a young woman with bright eyes and curly hair with one child, a little boy 3 years old.

At the end of the house is the horse shed—one horse is near dead and we hold a consultation and advise a rifle ball as cure and it is administered and the poor animal is out of her misery. Towards evening the sun comes out, wind goes down and sun sets clear, but O, how cold!

Our host has been out with his remaining horse and drawn up a stick of dry wood and we get warm. In the evening Mrs. M. brings out a straw bed, we lay it on the dirt floor before the stove and with our blankets make a very comfortable bed. A Mr. Marsh—brother-in-law of Morse a young man about 30 takes the other side of the stove in front of the bed and sleeps on the floor. It is the calculation to keep a fire all night.

Monday 4

It is broad daylight before we peep out from our blankets—have had a good nights sleep, the fire is all out and has been since midnight. Soon a fire is built and we crawl out. The little dog put out in the evening is in the house this morning. “How did he get in?” says Mrs. M. He must have found some hole says Mr. M. We have breakfast at 8 and prepare for a start. Our teams are pulling out and we hasten on our wrappings and bid good by and are off for Turkey creek towards Kearney. It is a clear cold day—the coldest of the trip, and the snow is drifted and very hard—so hard that it sometimes bears the horses and wagons. We all walk to favor the teams & we do it very comfortably, the snow is so hard.

The party reached home without further adventures. To complete the story of this organized effort to colonize southwestern Nebraska, it need only be said that it failed. No town was built upon the site selected, and the company



was disbanded. Several of the stockholders settled in that section, and one of the nine who was with this first party is still living in Red Willow county. In the spring of 1872 and later the people flocked thither, settling first along the streams, but finally spreading over the divides, and to-day you will find the shacks of the pioneers scattered even among the sand-hills of the extreme western part of southwest Nebraska.

#### PAWNEE-SIOUX MASSACRE, AUGUST 5, 1873

On the fifth day of August, 1873, occurred the battle between the Sioux and the Pawnee Indians, in what has since come to be known as Massacre Cañon, a ravine about four miles north of the subsequent site of Trenton, Hitchcock county. The Pawnee—about two hundred and fifty men, one hundred women and fifty children—were on a buffalo hunt. On the third day of July they had left their reservation for the purpose of hunting in the Republican valley with the consent of the authorities and in charge of a special agent, a white man. Their hunt had been successful, and they were about to return to their reservation with the meat and skins of eight hundred buffaloes.

The day before the battle they had come across from the Beaver and camped in the cañon. At the moment of the attack, which occurred in the early morning, most of the men of the tribe were hunting straggling buffaloes, and the women were making preparations for the day's journey. The Sioux, comprising six hundred members of the Ogalala and Brulé bands, surprised the Pawnee, who briefly resisted but soon fled to avoid being surrounded and annihilated by overwhelming numbers. They abandoned all of their possessions, including their winter's supply of meat and other provisions, robes and saddles. The women and children, less able than the men to escape, suffered most in the ensuing slaughter.

According to the report of the Indian agent,<sup>11</sup> twenty men, thirty-nine women and ten children—or sixty-nine in all—were killed, and eleven women and children captured. The latter were restored to the tribe, and about a dozen wounded were also taken home and recovered. Those who lived in the vicinity at the time remember the frenzied flight of the Pawnee through the valley, and their pitiable condition. It seems that the military authorities knew of the proximity of the Sioux and of the danger to the Pawnee. Major Russell, of the army, with sixty privates and twenty scouts, was camped within a few miles of the scene of the massacre, and was, at the time of its occurrence, on his way up the valley to intercept the Sioux. He met the fleeing Pawnee about ten miles from the battle field. When the Sioux saw the soldiers they stopped the pursuit and retreated to the northwest. The bodies of several Sioux warriors were subsequently found, suspended in trees, near the Frenchman. Those who visited the scene of the conflict a few days after it occurred found indescribable carnage and disorder.

#### FAMINE OF 1874

In the late summer and fall of 1871 a few homesteaders settled in what is now Furnas county, but, with possibly a single exception, no white man lived in southwestern Nebraska west of the one hundredth meridian at that time. During the next three years settlers swarmed in until, by the fall of 1874, they numbered—men, women and children—not less than two thousand. Farming had been carried on with but indifferent success. The area under cultivation as early as 1872 was necessarily restricted. The following

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<sup>11</sup> Report of William Burgess, agent of the Pawnee, Messages and Documents 1873-74, pt. 1, p. 562. See also the statement of Barclay White, superintendent of the northern superintendency, *ibid.*, page 554, and an interesting story of the battle by William Z. Taylor, in volume 16 of the society's Collections, page 165.—ED.

year drouth cut short the crops. In 1874 the grasshoppers came in clouds that darkened the sun and consumed every vestige of vegetation. The settlers in a new country are usually people of limited means, and under the most favorable circumstances the struggle for existence is severe. With the base of supplies a hundred miles away and wagons the only means of transportation, and nothing grown to eke out the scanty supplies a few dollars possessed by the settlers would buy, to avoid starvation, their alternative was to abandon the country or ask for aid.

The destitution on the western prairies in the fall of 1874 was so appallingly universal as to attract the attention of the civilized world. Congress appropriated one hundred and fifty thousand dollars for the relief of the needy, and donations came from every corner of the nation. But for this charity, hundreds of people would have starved to death. The war department sent Colonel, afterwards General Dudley,<sup>12</sup> to investigate conditions. He reported that in Red Willow county, out of a total estimated population of eight hundred, five hundred and forty-four would require aid before the winter was half over; that three hundred would need assistance within twenty days; and that at the time of his visit more than one hundred were either already out of food or would be in less than five days. Some of the families had one or two cows and others a yoke of oxen or a horse, but many of them had worn down their animals

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<sup>12</sup> Nathan A. M. Dudley was made brevet colonel March 13, 1865. July 1, 1876, he was appointed lieutenant colonel of the Ninth cavalry. He was brevetted brigadier general of volunteers January 19, 1865. According to the report of the adjutant general, October 9, 1874, he was Major of the Third cavalry and in command of three companies of that regiment at Fort McPherson. (Report of the Secretary of War, 1874-75, v. 1, p. 72.) The federal congress appropriated thirty thousand dollars in money and clothing worth one hundred and fifty thousand dollars to be distributed among the people of the several states which had suffered from grasshoppers. The legislature of 1875 authorized the issue of bonds to the amount of fifty thousand dollars, their proceeds to be expended in providing seed for the sufferers.—ED.



attempting to hunt buffalo and had no feed with which to recuperate them. The few hogs he saw were mere skeletons, having had no corn but had subsisted almost entirely on wild roots they found in the bottoms. Those who had property of this kind could not sell it if they would; for there were no buyers with money, and they would not have dared to sell, if there had been, for then they would have been without means to avail themselves of the assistance that was offered.

Colonel Dudley reported, further, that only two hundred bushels of corn and less than one hundred bushels of potatoes, half-grown, had been raised during the preceding season in all the afflicted country. Little, or no wheat had been planted, as the settlers were too poor to buy seed. Such conditions afforded no gainful employment, and no money or commodity to pay for it. In the early fall buffalo meat had been obtainable, but at the time of Colonel Dudley's visit the buffalo had abandoned this part of the country, and gone beyond the reach of the sufferers. Their homes were mostly board shacks, which were scant shelter from the biting winds that sweep over the prairies in winter. Fortunate were they who occupied dugouts or sod houses. Not infrequently sickness added to the misery caused by hunger and cold, or death had removed the mainstay of wife and children, and families subsisted upon the carcasses of animals that had died from natural causes. Unable even to buy ammunition for the hunt, the settlers set traps along the streams for such wild creatures as would walk into them. By the sale of occasional pelts, or their exchange for the barest necessities, and by eating the flesh of such of the trapped animals as were fit for food, they managed to survive. It should be noted that this section was remote from any railroad and that all imported supplies were hauled in wagons weary miles across the almost trackless prairies.

Far into the following year rations were issued to the needy, under the supervision of the federal authorities.



At times as many as three-fourths of the inhabitants of this region obtained their entire subsistence at the hands of charity.

#### CHEYENNE RAID OF 1878

After the settlement of southwestern Nebraska began, the people were singularly free from molestation by the Indians. Although in the early years the Indians ranged over the country west of the settlements, and sometimes small parties of savages were seen by the homesteaders, it was not until the early part of October, 1878, that a serious Indian scare occurred. A report that the Cheyenne were on the warpath sent the occupants of the outlying ranches scurrying to the towns, where preparations were made to repulse the expected attacks.

The story of the flight of the Cheyenne from their reservation in the Indian Territory, upon which they had been placed two years before, to their old haunts in the Black Hills, is one of the most dramatic in history; but it shall not be told here. Suffice it to say that three hundred of that tribe, under the leadership of Dull Knife, Little Wolf, Wild Hog and Old Crow, comprising but eighty-nine warriors, the others being women and children, started from the Cheyenne and Arapaho agency on the ninth day of September, 1878, and crossed the Kansas-Nebraska boundary on the first day of October. They were pursued by detachments of soldiers and posses of civilians, and were overtaken and attacked at a place called Sand Creek in Kansas; but, eluding their pursuers, they continued on their course and were not brought to bay until they reached the northwestern corner of the state. There, in a winter campaign, they were practically exterminated. It is reported that they killed thirty-two people in Rawlins and Decatur counties, Kansas, just across the Nebraska line; but, so far as is known, only one man fell a victim to their vengeance in the adjacent part of Nebraska.

George Rowley, who kept a "cow camp" at Wauneta Falls, had been to Greeley, Colorado, for supplies. When he reached Ogalala on his return he learned the Cheyenne were on the warpath, and, alarmed for the safety of his family, he left his team and wagon and started for his home alone, on horseback. Two weeks after the passage of the Indians, his saddle, from which the leather had been cut, was found. This led to the discovery of his body, riddled with bullets, and hidden in a growth of sunflowers on the brink of a cañon. It is believed that the Indians, seeing him coming along the cattle trail, which was a well-marked highway between Texas and Montana, concealed themselves in a pocket, and shot him to death as he passed.

Records are extant which disclose that on this raid the Indians stole horses, killed cattle and destroyed other personal property of the settlers. Probably the only reason that comparatively few of the pioneers were killed is that most of them had been warned of the danger and fled to safety. This raid of the Cheyenne was the last hostile appearance of the Indians in this part of the state.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> For a further account of the return trip of this band of forcibly exiled northern Cheyenne to their old home—for that it really was—see my history of the Indian war on the Nebraska plains, ms. pages 192, 200, and 202. According to the report of the secretary of the interior, cited at page 192, there were about three hundred Indians in all, eighty-seven of them warriors. General Terry says (page 200) there were about sixty men with their families. The agent at the Cheyenne and Arapaho agency in his report dated September 20, 1878, (House Executive Documents 1878-79, v. 2, p. 49) says that this band of Northern Cheyenne were seceders from the agreement of the majority to unite with the Southern Cheyenne, Major J. K. Mizner, of the Fourth cavalry says (*ibid.*, p. 48) that the band comprised eighty-nine men, one hundred and twelve women and one hundred and thirty-four children—about one-third of the entire Northern Cheyenne tribe. Major Mizner said they ran away on account of bad rations and the unhealthy condition of the country. General George Crook, commander of the Department of the Platte, in his report for 1879 (House Executive Documents 1879-80, v. 2, p. 77), with his characteristic courage and sense of justice, apologized for the flight of the fugitives, which he attributed to chills and fever and insufficient food. He chided the government for having forgotten the distinguished services of the exiles on its side in the campaigns

It was customary for the old men of the Indian tribes unacquainted with the art of writing as we know it, to gather their clansmen around them for the purpose of relating to them the valorous deeds of their ancestors. From father to son the tales descended; and thus the chronicles of the tribes were perpetuated. In these days, when we have a press that records, daily, not only the happenings of our own people but of the whole world, we do not charge our memories with facts; and, anomalous as it may seem, we are better informed about what occurs in the antipodes, than about what transpires around us. Things that are of first importance to us are forgotten in the consideration we give to things that are of consequence to men who are naught to us. And yet with all our means for the preservation of facts, much of that which is of real significance is left unrecorded.

No history is fuller of tragedy and sacrifice, of poetry and romance, of sorrow and mystery, than that of the people who first came to the region of which I write. The pioneers of southwestern Nebraska, after crossing the great river that forms the eastern boundary of our state, drove their white-covered wagons across the frontier, beyond the outposts of civilization and the help of men, into a land that was uncharted as the ocean. They found a prairie stretching, like the ocean, away to limits of vision, the surface tossed, as if by the wind, into mighty waves that were crested, not with foam, but with flowers. They found the land tenanted by wild animals and by savage men, the uplands teeming with buffaloes, the lowlands sheltering elks, deer, and antelopes. At night, out of the darkness that

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against the Sioux in 1876 and 1878. They surrendered to a detachment of soldiers under Major Carlton on the 23d of October, 1878, in the sand-hills, about forty miles southeast of Camp Sheridan. They were confined at Fort Robinson, and the undertaking to remove them again to Indian Territory on the 9th of January, 1879, was met with desperate and bloody resistance.—ED.



rimmed their camp fires, they heard the wail of the coyote. From the branches of the trees beneath which they sought shelter, they saw the eyes of some great cat, glowing like living coals.

When they reached their chosen land, they unhitched their horses or unyoked their cattle, and turned them loose to graze. The first desire of every white man, indeed his first need, is to have a home. They selected the site for the dwelling they meant to raise. They cut the trees that nature had furnished for their use along the streams and from them fashioned their habitation, or they turned the prairie sod, and from it built a shelter from the sun and wind and rain, using poles to support the roof and the untanned skins of deer or buffaloes for door and windows; or, like the wild creatures that had been in undisputed possession of the land since their first coming, they dug a cave in a cañon's bank; or they traveled wearily back, across the trackless plain, to the nearest railway station, where they loaded their wagons with boards with which they constructed shacks to shield them from winter's blasts. There were no carpenters, no artisans—none to help them but their comrades. They learned the lesson of self-reliance, the first lesson of the pioneer, of which we of to-day know too little.

In health, the life, though hard, had its compensations in the prairies, in the glorious sunshine, in the free, pure air of this westland; but in sickness there was no doctor who might be summoned by telephone, no one to administer comfort, but some kindly neighbor-woman with her homely remedies. And all that could be done for the dead was to lay them in the earth, on some lonely hillside, sometimes in a rude pine box to save them from molestation by prowling wolves, but often merely wrapped in blankets to protect the closed eyes from the pressing clods. Tears and a prayer were awarded the departed, and outpouring of sympathy from all the countryside for the living. Even to the poor



sick Indian who came to their door the white settlers extended the hand of charity.

But all was not pain and sorrow. There were parties and social gatherings at the homestead houses. There were weddings and other joyous occasions. There were devotional services and times of thanksgiving, when the hearts of the pioneers were grateful for such blessings as they enjoyed. There were holiday seasons when, despite the poor harvest, the Christmas spirit prevailed.

Carlyle said, "Happy the people whose annals are blank in history books." In the popular signification of the term, we have had no history. No armies have marched across our land; no decisive battles have been fought upon our soil; none of our people have done anything to achieve fame and honor. The writers of history find nothing in our homely annals worth recording; and yet our pioneers can chronicle events that have the profoundest human interest. The happenings of their daily life contribute to a story that is as thrilling and as tragic as any that is told. After all, who shall say they are too insignificant to warrant repetition?

"All service ranks the same with God:  
 .....God's, puppets, best and worst,  
 Are we: there is no last nor first."

The incidents that filled those early days did not constitute the sum of life. Aside from the human element that entered into the computation, the manifestations of nature cast spells that were felt but that cannot be defined. The expanse of prairie, the tree-bordered streams, the flooding sunlight, the cloud flecked sky, the chasing shadows, the slipping waters, the sifting snowflakes, the sparkling stars, the silent moonlight, the scent of the wild flowers, the sweep of the storm cloud, the flash of the lightning, the crash of the thunder, the hiss of the rattle snake—all inspired sentiments that make the memory of those days, to those who

lived in them, pleasant to contemplate, and that will some day find expression in masterpieces of art and literature.

The proudest distinction any of us can enjoy should be that of calling ourselves pioneers; but the honor should be reserved for those who endured the hardships and privations of frontier life; for those who prepared the way for things that, in a material sense, are better; for those who have made this country what it is. To the first settlers we, who find this land a fit place to abide, owe a debt of gratitude we cannot repay.

## NEBRASKA, MOTHER OF STATES

BY ALBERT WATKINS

Virginia was called the mother of presidents—before she lost her political “pull” through the errancy of rebellion and Ohio succeeded to it through strategic location and even more aptitude, or greed, in grasping opportunity than her venerable hegemonic predecessor had shown. So, also, prior to the prolific parturition of Nebraska’s Titan territory, the Northwest Territory was—or might have been—called the mother of states. The 265,878 square miles of the Northwest Territory produced the five medium sized states of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan and Wisconsin and contributed 26,320 square miles of the 83,531 contained in Minnesota. The 351,558 square miles of Nebraska Territory produced the three great states of Nebraska, South Dakota, and North Dakota; about three-fourths of the greater state of Wyoming; nearly all of the immense state of Montana; and made a considerable contribution to Colorado.

Until the territory of Arkansas was formed, in 1819, all of the Louisiana Purchase north of the part now comprised in the state of Louisiana was under a single territorial organization, bearing the successive names of The District of Louisiana, The Territory of Louisiana, and Missouri. Out of this vast territory of Missouri there have been created the states of Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, and, in part, Oklahoma, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota. But the territory of Missouri, except that part in the neighborhood of St. Louis, was an unsettled wilderness occupied only by savage

Indians. White settlement, of economic and political importance, in the heart of this wilderness immediately followed the organization of Nebraska territory.

The part of Oklahoma which lies outside the Purchase was known as the "Public Land Strip" or "No Man's Land." It forms the northwest projection of the state, contains approximately 5,580 square miles, and constitutes Beaver county. The southwest corner of the state of Kansas—west of the one hundredth meridian and south of the Arkansas river and containing 7,776 square miles—belonged successively to Spain, Mexico, and Texas, and was outside the Purchase.

The original territories of Kansas and Nebraska extended from the Missouri river to the summit of the Rocky mountains. Kansas contained 126,283 and Nebraska 351,558 square miles. From Kansas 44,965 square miles and from Nebraska 16,035 square miles were taken to form the territory of Colorado and remain a part of the state of Colorado. But the part of the territory of Kansas so incorporated in Colorado which lies south of the Arkansas, containing approximately 7,000 square miles, is outside the Purchase; so that about 54,000 of the total 104,500 square miles comprised in Colorado belong to the Purchase. The corner of original Nebraska bounded on the north by the forty-second parallel of latitude, on the east by the one hundred and sixth meridian, and on the southwest by the continental divide, containing about 7,400 square miles—1,400 in Colorado and 6,000 in Wyoming—is outside the Purchase. Most of this fraction was comprised in the strip about three-fourths of a degree in width, extending up to the forty-second parallel—the northern boundary of Mexico prior to her war with the United States. This elongated projection was a part of Texas when that insurgent offshoot of Mexico was annexed to the United States. It was given up to the mother country as a part



of the compromise of 1850. Title to a small tract of this casual corner of Nebraska lying next to the divide, is traced directly to Spain.

The western boundary of the Purchase, as fixed in our treaty with Spain, of February 22, 1819,<sup>1</sup> did not constantly follow the Rocky mountain divide but, after reaching it at latitude 39° 20' and longitude 106° 15', near the subsequent site of Leadville, proceeded directly north to the forty-second parallel and thence directly west—crossing the mountains three degrees beyond—to the Pacific ocean. Prior to the treaty, the western boundary of the Purchase was, somewhat indefinitely of course, the watershed of the Mississippi; and, proceeding northwesterly from a point about one hundred miles west of the mouth of that river, it first struck the Rocky mountain range, at its southern limit by that name, near the thirty-sixth parallel of latitude—not far northeast of the subsequent site of Santa Fe.

In the preliminary Oregon treaty of October 20, 1818, between Great Britain and the United States,<sup>2</sup> the “Stony Mountains” were acknowledged to be the western American boundary, by virtue of our purchase of Louisiana; and, accordingly, in the final treaty—June 15, 1846<sup>3</sup>—the southeast corner of our new Oregon acquisition was fixed three degrees west of the right angle of the boundary line of the treaty of 1819 with Spain, and which subsequently became the northeastern limit of the state of Texas. The traditional and natural western boundary of the Purchase—the summit of the mountains—was followed in the organization of the territories of Utah and Nebraska, in the main of Kansas and Montana, and, in part, of New Mexico. Nebraska contributed from its original territory 16,035 of

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<sup>1</sup> U. S. Statutes at Large, v. 8, p. 252.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., v. 9, p. 869.

the 104,500 square miles contained in the territory of Colorado; 74,287 of the 97,883 square miles contained in the territory of Wyoming; 68,972 of the 150,932 square miles contained in the territory of Dakota—all of it west of the Missouri river; and 116,269 of the 143,776 square miles contained in the territory of Montana. The remainder, 75,995 square miles, constituted the state of Nebraska. That part of the original territory of Nebraska bounded on the north by the forty-fifth, and on the south by the forty-third parallel of latitude; on the east by the twenty-seventh meridian, and on the west by the Rocky mountains—at the northwest by the thirty-fourth meridian—containing 43,666 square miles, was first taken to form a part of Dakota, next to form a part of Idaho, next to form a part of the territory of Wyoming, and is now a part of the state of Wyoming. The part of original Nebraska bounded on the north by the forty-third parallel, on the east by the twenty-seventh meridian, on the south by the forty-first parallel and on the west by the Rocky mountains, containing 30,621 square miles, was first transferred to the territory of Idaho, next to the territory of Dakota, next to the territory of Wyoming, and is now a part of the state of Wyoming.

Colorado, Wyoming, Dakota and Montana retained their territorial form when they became states, though Dakota was divided into the two states of North Dakota and South Dakota. The part of Montana which was not taken from Nebraska—27,507 square miles—lies between the Rocky mountain divide and the Bitter Root mountains, and so is outside the Purchase.

The act of March 2, 1861, which established the territory of Dakota, also added to Nebraska that part of Washington (4,638 square miles) and Utah (10,740 square miles), lying east of the one hundred and tenth meridian and between the forty-first and forty-third parallels of

latitude. The Rocky mountain divide formed its eastern boundary, so that it was outside the Purchase. But this alien acquisition was only temporary. It was incorporated in the territory of Idaho in 1863, and in the territory of Wyoming in 1868.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The respective original areas of the territories of Nebraska and Kansas and the area of each of the parts of other territories taken from them are given in the Compendium of the Ninth Census (1870), pp. 540, 542 and volume 1 of the same census, pp. 573-587. These areas have been slightly changed by subsequent surveys. In two instances the areas of small parts of these territories which are outside the Louisiana Purchase were obtained by the editor by counting the townships contained in them as they appear in reliable maps. They are, therefore, not entirely accurate.

## NEBRASKA TERRITORIAL ACQUISITION

BY ALBERT WATKINS

Though Nebraska's parturition was prolific beyond that of any other territory,<sup>1</sup> her state area has been increased only by the small tract above the Keyapaha and Niobrara rivers transferred from Dakota by the act of congress passed March 28, 1882, and accepted by an act of the legislature passed May 23, 1882.<sup>2</sup> How Nebraska came by this quite important territorial acquisition and at the expense of Dakota, is an interesting and original inquiry.

On the fifth of May, 1879, Alvin Saunders, United States senator from Nebraska and a member of the senate committee on territories, introduced a bill—s. 550—to extend the northern boundary of the state of Nebraska, which was referred to the committee on territories of which the senator was a member. Following is a copy of the bill:

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:*

That when the Indian title to all that portion of the Territory of Dakota lying south of the forty-third parallel of north latitude and east of the Keyapaha River and west

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<sup>1</sup> See "Nebraska, The Mother of States," ante.

<sup>2</sup> U. S. Statutes at Large, v. 22, p. 35; Laws of Nebraska 1882, p. 56. In the year 1867 the Missouri river cut directly across a projection of Union county, Dakota, containing about three sections which, according to the law of avulsion—abrupt cut-off—inconveniently remained a part of Dakota until it was detached and added to Nebraska by an act of congress passed April 28, 1870. By the act of February 9, 1871, the legislature of Nebraska accepted this gift of the freakish Missouri and attached it to Dakota county (United States Statutes at Large, v. 16, p. 93; Laws of Nebraska 1871, p. 131). For a further account of this incident see my footnote 3, Nebraska Constitutional Conventions, v. 3, p. 195.



of the Missouri River, shall be extinguished, the jurisdiction over such lands shall be, and hereby is, ceded to the State of Nebraska, and the northern boundary of the State shall be extended to said forty-third parallel, reserving to the United States the original right of soil in said lands, and disposing of the same. *Provided*, That this act shall not take effect until the President shall by proclamation declare that the Indian title to said lands has been extinguished; nor shall it take effect until the State of Nebraska shall have assented to the provisions of this act.<sup>3</sup>

On the 20th of January, 1880, the bill was further considered as follows:

Mr. Saunders. I have the consent of the Senator who has the special order of the day in charge to call up the bill (S. No. 550) to extend the northern boundary of the State of Nebraska.

Mr. Davis, of West Virginia. I ask for the regular order. I do not like to antagonize any gentleman.

Mr. Saunders. This probably will not take three minutes; certainly not five. If it takes more than that time, I shall withdraw it.

Mr. Davis, of West Virginia. Well, I give notice that I shall call for the regular order after the bill of the Senator from Nebraska is disposed of.

Mr. McMillan [Minnesota]. I should like to ask the Senator from Nebraska to permit this bill to lie over until I have an opportunity of looking at it.

Mr. Saunders. If the Senator is not satisfied, I will state that the bill was unanimously recommended by the Committee on Territories, with the amendment now proposed. There is no objection to it by any one. It was a unanimous report. The bill merely changes the line.

Mr. McMillan. I reserve the right to object.

Mr. Saunders. It merely extends the line between the Territory of Dakota and the State of Nebraska, a thing which would probably have been done when the State was admitted, only they did not know at the time where the rivers ran.

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<sup>3</sup> Congressional Record, v. 9, pt. 1, p. 1043. This copy was made from the original bill, on file in the Capitol at Washington.

The amendment reported by the Committee on Territories was read, being to strike out all after the enacting clause of the bill, and in lieu thereof to insert:

That the northern boundary of the State of Nebraska shall be, and hereby is, extended so as to include all that portion of the Territory of Dakota lying south of the forty-third parallel of north latitude, and east of the Keyapaha River and west of the main channel of the Missouri River; and when the Indian title to the lands thus described shall be extinguished, the jurisdiction over said lands shall be, and hereby is, ceded to the State of Nebraska, and the northern boundary of the state shall be, and hereby is, extended to said forty-third parallel, as fully and effectually as if said lands had been included in the boundaries of said state at the time of its admission to the Union; reserving to the United States the original right of soil in said lands and of disposing of the same: *Provided*, That this act, so far as jurisdiction is concerned, shall not take effect until the President shall, by proclamation, declare that the Indian title to said lands has been extinguished; nor shall it take effect until the State of Nebraska shall have assented to the provisions of this act.

Mr. McMillan. I shall be compelled to ask the Senator from Nebraska to permit this bill to lie over that I may have an opportunity to examine it. It is a matter of too much importance to be acted on hastily.

Mr. McPherson [New Jersey]. Then I call for the unfinished business.<sup>4</sup>

On the 3d of May the amendment or substitute was considered at length. Many of the most noted senators participated in the discussion, and gave Senator Saunders a severe grilling.

The bill was reported from the Committee on Territories with an amendment, to strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

That the northern boundary of the State of Nebraska shall be, and hereby is, extended so as to include all that

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., v. 10, pt. 1, p. 410.

portion of the Territory of Dakota lying south of the forty-third parallel of north latitude, and east of the Keyapaha River and west of the main channel of the Missouri River; and when the Indian title to the lands thus described shall be extinguished, the jurisdiction over said lands shall be, and hereby is, ceded to the State of Nebraska, and the northern boundary of the state shall be, and hereby is, extended to said forty-third parallel, as fully and effectually as if said lands had been included in the boundaries of said state at the time of its admission to the Union; reserving to the United States the original right of soil in said lands and of disposing of the same: *Provided*, That this act so far as jurisdiction is concerned, shall not take effect until the President shall, by proclamation, declare that the Indian title to said lands has been extinguished; nor shall it take effect until the State of Nebraska shall have assented to the provisions of this act.

Mr. Cockrell [Missouri]. I offer the following amendment—

Mr. Saunders. Let me put in one from the committee first. The committee have authorized me to make another amendment, which I wish to move first.

Mr. Cockrell. Very well.

Mr. Saunders. I move to strike out the words "and hereby is" where they occur in lines 9 and 10, and where they occur in line 11, so as to read:

The jurisdiction over said lands shall be ceded to the State of Nebraska, and the northern boundary of the state shall be extended to said forty-third parallel.

The amendment to the amendment was agreed to.

Mr. Cockrell. I desire to insert in line 9, immediately after the word "extinguished", the words "if it shall ever be extinguished"; that is, if the Indian title shall ever be extinguished.

Mr. Saunders. I have no objection to that amendment.

The amendment to the amendment was agreed to.

Mr. Cockrell. At the close I move to add:

Nor shall this act create any liability or obligation of any kind whatever on the part of the United States to extinguish said Indian title.



Mr. Dawes [Massachusetts]. I ask the Senator to add "or in any way affect the Indian title thereto."

Mr. Cockrell. I have no objection to that.

Mr. Teller [Colorado]. Would that do any good?

Mr. Dawes. I do not know that it would, but I do not think it would do any harm.

Mr. Cockrell. There can be no objection to that, as a matter of course.

Mr. Teller. It is well enough for Senators to look after the interests of these Indian reservations, but it does seem to me a remarkable thing that in the Senate we should put words into a bill that everybody admits will have no meaning whatever. Does anybody suppose that because we put this piece of land in the State of Nebraska the Government loses its title to the land or that the Indians lose any title they may have under any stipulation of a treaty? Then why put in these unmeaning and needless words?

The amendment to the amendment was agreed to.

Mr. Ingalls [Kansas]. I wish to know whether the words "and hereby is," after the amendment offered by the Senator from Nebraska, remain in any portion of the bill. I was not able to learn from the reporting of his amendment at the Clerk's desk.

Mr. Cockrell. They remain in the fourth line.

Mr. Ingalls. Those words, in my judgment, should also be stricken from that line. After the word "be", in line 4, I move to strike out the words "and hereby is."

The amendment to the amendment was agreed to.

Mr. Thurman [Ohio]. I have never read this bill, but I have just heard it read at the desk, and it strikes me as something anomalous that requires explanation. Are we going to extend the line of a State to embrace territory within it, and at the same time say the State shall have no jurisdiction over the Indian territory thus acquired?

Mr. Saunders. No jurisdiction until the Indian title shall have been extinguished.

Mr. Thurman. But it is a mere promise to give the lands to the State in future. How can you extend the line of a State so as to include new territory and at the same



time say the State shall have no jurisdiction over it. That passes my comprehension.

Mr. Saunders. Probably as good an answer as I could give to the Senator from Ohio would be to say that the very same words were used in the act attaching the Platte district to the State of Missouri. That was done with the same provision exactly used in this bill, that the jurisdiction should not extend over the territory until the Indian title had been extinguished.

Mr. Thurman. If it meant to say that the act should not take effect until that happened, and the President should make a proclamation to that effect, then I could understand it; but how you can include by words of present significance a territory in a State and at the same time say that the State shall have no jurisdiction at all, is what I cannot understand. While I am up, as I know nothing about it, I wish to inquire of the Senator how much new territory does this embrace?

Mr. Saunders. It will make somewhere probably about eighteen townships. The territory is about sixty miles long, a sort of irregular triangle. It is on an average about eight or nine miles wide and runs a length of sixty miles. It is one mile wide at the west end. The purpose is simply to straighten the line. I have a map of it here if any one wishes to look at it.

Mr. Thurman. It is eight miles wide at one end and one mile at the other and sixty miles long?

Mr. Saunders. Yes. There are about eighteen townships of land all told.

Mr. Kirkwood [Iowa]. It runs up to the Niobrara River?

Mr. Saunders. As the line of the State of Nebraska now stands it runs up the Missouri River to the mouth of the Niobrara River, and then up that stream until it comes to the mouth of the Keyapaha, then up the Keyapaha until it strikes the forty-third parallel of north latitude, then running west to the western boundary of the State. What we are asking is to extend that line east of [to] the Missouri so as to get on the forty-third parallel as the north line of Nebraska and the south line of Dakota.

Mr. Allison. May I ask the Senator from Nebraska what the character of this land is that is to be transferred?

Mr. Paddock. About the average character of the whole Sioux reservation. It is a part of that.

Mr. Saunders. There are two or three large streams running through it, furnishing bottom land.

Mr. Allison. Good agricultural or pasture land?

Mr. Saunders. Yes, sir.

Mr. Teller. Good land?

Mr. Saunders. I should like to read for the information of Senators the act to extend the western boundary of the State of Missouri to the Missouri River, which has been adapted to this case:

*Be it enacted, &c.,* That when the Indian title to all the lands lying between the State of Missouri and the Missouri River shall be extinguished, the jurisdiction over said lands shall be hereby ceded to the State of Missouri, and the western boundary of said State shall be then extended to the Missouri River, reserving to the United States the original right of soil in said lands, and of disposing of the same: *Provided,* That this act shall not take effect until the President shall, by proclamation, declare that the Indian title to said lands has been extinguished; nor shall it take effect until the State of Missouri shall have assented to the provisions of this act.

Approved June 7, 1836.

Mr. Thurman. That is just as I suggested. The act itself was not to take effect until the Indian title was extinguished and the President should have issued his proclamation; but if I understood this bill aright—perhaps I did not understand it correctly, as I have never seen it—it takes effect *in presenti*.

Mr. Saunders. It is the same act.

Mr. Thurman. I do not wish to interfere with the bill at all. The State of Nebraska is a very small State, and no doubt needs these two hundred and seventy square miles!

Mr. Paddock [Nebraska]. I desire to state to the Senator from Ohio that the acquisition of the territory is a matter of very little account to the State of Nebraska; but a part of the boundary is on a dry creek a portion of

the year, and it is not a proper boundary. The Keyapaha is a very small, insignificant stream, and a dry creek is a very poor boundary for a State. The desire is that the established parallel, the forty-third parallel, shall be the boundary. That is the object sought to be accomplished, and not the acquisition of the territory, which is a matter of very small importance.

Mr. Williams [Kentucky]. I want to say just one word. The proposition is merely to include this strip of land within the territorial limits of the State without bringing it under the lawful jurisdiction of the State until the Indian title shall be extinguished. That is the proposition.

Mr. Paddock. Of course there will be no jurisdiction on the part of the State until the title is extinguished anyway. This is a defined permanent reservation, and of course the State would have no jurisdiction over it, even if it had been originally within its limits.

Mr. Williams. I am not urging that as an objection to the bill, but as a reason why we should dispose of it.

Mr. Dawes. I should like to inquire of the Senator from Nebraska whether this bill includes within the State of Nebraska the entire old Ponca reservation, so that no part of it is left out?

Mr. Paddock. It does not interfere with the Ponca reservation at all.

Mr. Dawes. It does not cut it in two?

Mr. Saunders. Oh, no.

Mr. Paddock. Not at all.

The Presiding Officer. The question is on agreeing to the amendment of the committee as amended.

The amendment, as amended, was agreed to.

Mr. Teller. Let the bill be read as amended.

The Chief Clerk read the bill as amended.

The bill was reported to the Senate as amended, and the amendment was concurred in.

Mr. Hoar [Massachusetts]. I should like to inquire of the Senator from Nebraska, is there not a jurisdiction in the United States, so far as offenses committed by white men are concerned, over the Indian reservation?

Mr. Saunders. If so, it belongs to the Territory of Dakota. We are not interfering at all with the title.



Mr. Hoar. Then the difficulty suggested by the Senator from Ohio is not answered to my mind. I should like to know whether this becomes a part of the State of Nebraska; and if the State of Nebraska at once accepts, so far as jurisdiction is concerned, when the Indian title may not be extinguished for twenty years, under what authority can the United States punish one white man for an offense upon another in a State? If it is a part of the State, the United States cannot deal with this offense merely because it is on an Indian reservation.

Mr. Saunders. How do they do with the Indians residing in the State of New York?

Mr. Hoar. The United States does not punish white men who commit offenses one on another on an Indian reservation in the State of New York. I do not understand that it does.

Mr. Saunders. I ask the question for information.

Mr. Hoar. I suggest why not strike out in the sixteenth and seventeenth lines the words "so far as jurisdiction is concerned," the entire act to take effect when the President shall make his proclamation? That answers all the Senator's purpose.

The Presiding Officer. Does the Senator from Massachusetts offer an amendment?

Mr. Hoar. Yes, sir; although I confess I do not understand the subject as well as the Senators in charge.

Mr. Saunders. I think that this subject was thoroughly discussed at the time the Platte purchase was added to the State of Missouri.

Mr. Blaine [Maine]. Then why not employ the same language?

Mr. Saunders. We have.

Mr. Blaine. The exact language?

Mr. Thurman. If the Senator will pardon me, he does not follow the language. The words "so far as jurisdiction is concerned" are not in the Missouri act. That is just what makes the distinction.

Mr. Saunders. The Missouri act reads:

*Provided*, That this act shall not take effect until the President shall by proclamation declare that the Indian title to said lands has been extinguished; nor shall it take



effect until the State of Missouri shall have assented to the provisions of this act.

Mr. Hoar. My amendment makes this bill conform to that act.

Mr. Paddock. There can be no objection to the amendment.

Mr. Hoar. The Senator from Nebraska will observe that in his bill the words are not that the act shall have no effect but only that it shall not take effect so far as the jurisdiction is concerned. Those words are not in the old Missouri act, not in the statute. Therefore the operation of this bill is to attempt to make the territory a part of a State and to provide that the State shall have no jurisdiction over it. If it be a part of the State, certainly the United States can have no jurisdiction over it except as it has over all State territory.

Mr. Saunders. What is the proposition of the Senator from Massachusetts?

Mr. Hoar. The proposition is to strike out the words "so far as jurisdiction is concerned" from the bill, which makes it exactly correspond to the act to which the Senator says it does correspond.

Mr. Saunders. I have no objection to that amendment.

Mr. Blaine. The Senator from Nebraska will observe that the committee undoubtedly, when framing the bill, referred to that act. One of the most elaborately discussed propositions of that day was the Platte purchase. The wording of that act by Colonel Benton was done with great care and to avoid the very points which have come up in this discussion; and as it is a precedent of such great moment it seems to me it would be wise in our legislation to follow it.

Mr. Saunders. The bill was intended to follow it exactly.

Mr. Paddock. There can be no objection to the amendment of the Senator from Massachusetts.

Mr. Saunders. There is no objection to the amendment.

Mr. Teller. It seems to me that we shall get into trouble with this bill in the shape we are putting it in, at

all events. This is well known to be on the southern line of a portion of the Territory of Dakota. From the present indications Dakota will be a State probably in the next two or three years. I have no doubt that Dakota has a population at this time sufficient to entitle her to a Representative in Congress, and I know they will be here at the next Congress asking to be admitted, and undoubtedly will be admitted. When the State of Dakota is admitted the Indian title will remain unextinguished. The Government will probably admit Dakota when it demands admission, with some provision with reference to the Indian lands and Indian title, and here will be a little strip of land a mile wide at one end and eight miles wide at the other which will be neither in a State nor in a Territory, which will neither be subject to the laws of Dakota nor to the laws of Nebraska. I should like to inquire in what kind of a condition the people who are living there, whether they be white or red, would be placed.

Mr. Paddock. I do not think there is a single person living in the district of territory involved in this bill. So far as the intercourse laws are concerned, I should like to inquire of the Senator if he thinks a change of that district from the Territory to State limitations changes the state of the intercourse laws.

Mr. Teller. That has not anything to do with the question. It will neither be in a State nor in a Territory, but will be between two States subject to the jurisdiction of neither.

Mr. Paddock. I think the Senator's conclusion is a wrong one.

Mr. Teller. It may be that it is wrong.

Mr. Paddock. It certainly is wrong, because until the act itself takes effect the State does not obtain jurisdiction; it is not a part of the State until the law takes effect; it is still within the limits of the Territory.

Mr. Teller. If the honorable Senator from Nebraska will wait until I get through he will understand more about it, or less, I do not know which.

Mr. Paddock. Less.

Mr. Saunders. I cannot hear what the Senator says.

Mr. Teller. It is not my fault. I am talking as loud as any decent man ought to talk.

This piece of ground will not be in Nebraska or Dakota, because we put in here a provision that it shall not be in Nebraska until the Indian title is extinguished. That is an indefinite period. It may be for a thousand years. Then it will not come into Dakota, because it would be very unfair when we admit the State of Dakota to include after the passage of this bill this very piece of ground in Dakota; and so where will it be? What government will have jurisdiction of it? Neither of the States. I suppose the General Government will, as a piece of ground that is included in neither State; and it will be a remarkable condition of affairs for the Government to have a little strip of ground a mile wide at one end and eight miles wide at the other and sixty miles long, without any government over it at all. The truth is, it ought to be put in the State of Nebraska, with some provision that the Government shall reserve the right to manage the Indians and take care of them as it does now. There is no objection to the Government having an Indian reservation within a State if when the Government puts it in the State the Government reserves the right to have exclusive control of the Indians, and that they have done in some instances in Nebraska, as I recollect in their organic act.

Mr. Paddock. Does the Senator understand that every inch of this territory is now within the limits of the Sioux reservation?

Mr. Teller. Certainly I do.

Mr. Paddock. It is a part of the Sioux reservation. Therefore, of course, the intercourse laws are in force absolutely, and no other laws so far as that tract is concerned, and putting it into the State does not change the state of the law in respect of offenses that may be committed there. It will be in the Territory until this law takes effect.

The Presiding Officer. The question is on the amendment of the Senator from Massachusetts [Mr. Hoar].

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. Cockrell. Now let the bill be read as amended.



The Presiding Officer. The Secretary will read the bill as amended.

The Chief Clerk read as follows:

*Be it enacted, &c.*, That the northern boundary of the State of Nebraska shall be extended so as to include all that portion of the Territory of Dakota lying south of the forty-third parallel of north latitude, and east of the Keyapaha River and west of the main channel of the Missouri River; and when the Indian title to the lands thus described shall be extinguished, if it shall ever be extinguished, the jurisdiction over said lands shall be ceded to the State of Nebraska, and the northern boundary of the State shall be extended to said forty-third parallel, as fully and effectually as if said lands had been included in the boundaries of said State at the time of its admission to the Union, reserving to the United States the original right of soil in said lands, and of disposing of the same: *Provided*, That this act shall not take effect until the President shall, by proclamation, declare that the Indian title to said lands has been extinguished; nor shall it take effect until the State of Nebraska shall have assented to the provisions of this act; nor shall this act create any liability or obligation of any kind whatever on the part of the United States to extinguish said Indian title, or in any way affect the Indian title thereof.

Mr. Ingalls. I observe by an inspection of the map that this projected line bisects the Fort Randall military reservation. What I want to know is, this bill taking effect when the Indian title is extinguished, and the jurisdiction of this entire country being then ceded to Nebraska, if by operation of law we shall not then give the reservation to Nebraska without intending to do so.

Mr. Eaton [Connecticut]. "Reserving to the United States the original right of soil in said lands and of disposing of the same" is the language of the bill.

Mr. Ingalls. But here is not only an Indian reservation but a military reservation that comes down south of this rectified frontier of Nebraska, and we provide that the entire jurisdiction of this territory shall be ceded to Nebraska when the Indian title is extinguished. Now, if we pass the bill in this shape do we not necessarily, without intending



to do so, cede the portion of this military reservation that lies south of that line, and thereby perhaps very seriously interfere with the authority of the United States in that reservation? I suppose the intention of the Senator from Nebraska is to except from the operation of this act not only the Indian reservations, but the military reservations.

Mr. Saunders. It was supposed that that was covered by saying that the right to dispose of the soil was reserved to the Government of the United States.

Mr. Davis, of Illinois. It seems to me this bill is very immature and it ought to go back to the committee. I therefore move its recommittal to the Committee on Territories. They can report it back in a better shape than it is now.

The Presiding Officer. The Senator from Illinois moves that the bill be recommitted.

The motion was agreed to.<sup>5</sup>

On the 22d of May the senate finally considered the bill as follows:

The bill was reported from the Committee on Territories with an amendment to strike out all after the enacting clause of the bill and to insert:

That the northern boundary of the State of Nebraska shall be extended so as to include all that portion of the

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pt. 3, pp. 2960-62.

The part of the Fort Randall military reservation, referred to by Senator Ingalls, which was included in the transfer from Dakota to Nebraska, was bounded on the northeast by the Missouri river; on the southeast by a direct line starting from the Missouri river, in fractional section 24, township 34, north, range 10, west of the sixth principal meridian, and running southwesterly to the southwest corner of section 3, township 33 of the same range; on the southwest by a direct line running from the point last described northwesterly until it intersected the forty-third parallel of latitude in the middle of section 19, township 35, north, range 12, west; on the north by the forty-third parallel—from the point last described to its intersection with the Missouri river. The new territory was divided between Knox county and Holt county (Laws of Nebraska, 1883, pp. 199, 201). Knox county retains its part of the acquisition; but all of Holt county's part of it, except the fractional townships lying between its north boundary line and the Niobrara river, was taken toward forming Boyd county. The southwestern corner of Boyd county lying south of the Keyapha river is outside the acquired territory in question.

Territory of Dakota lying south of the forty-third parallel of north latitude and east of the Keyapaha River and west of the main channel of the Missouri River; and when the Indian title to the lands thus described shall be extinguished, if it ever shall be extinguished, the jurisdiction over said lands shall be ceded to the State of Nebraska, and the northern boundary of the State shall be extended to said forty-third parallel as fully and effectually as if said lands had been included in the boundaries of said State at the time of its admission to the Union; reserving to the United States the original right of soil in said lands and of disposing of the same: *Provided*, That this act shall not take effect until the President shall, by proclamation, declare that the Indian title to said lands has been extinguished; nor shall it take effect until the State of Nebraska shall have assented to the provisions of this act; nor shall this act create any liability or obligation of any kind whatever on the part of the United States to extinguish said Indian title or in any way affect the title thereto: *And provided further*, That this act shall in no way affect the right of the United States to control any military reservation, or any part thereof, which may now or hereafter be on said land.

Mr. Edmunds [Vermont]. I move to amend the amendment where the subject of military reservations is spoken of by inserting after the word "military" the words "or other;" so as to include any lawful reservation, whether you call it a military reservation or one for some public building or an Indian reservation, &c.

Mr. Saunders. That is all right.

The President *pro tempore*. The amendment will be reported.

The Chief Clerk. In line 24, after the word "military", it is proposed to insert "or other;" so as to read:

That this act shall in no way affect the right of the United States to control any military or other reservation, or any part thereof, which may now or hereafter be on said land.

The amendment to the amendment was agreed to.

Mr. Teller. I do not desire to obstruct the passage of this bill, but I made an objection to it the other day which I think still exists. Here is a proposition to take

out from the Territory of Dakota a strip of country very narrow at one end and not very wide at the other, containing but a few [square] miles, and to leave it in such a condition that it will neither be in a State nor in a Territory should Dakota be admitted. It cannot be contemplated that the Government will extinguish the title of the Indians to this land for many years. When the State of Dakota comes here, which it will very shortly if we pay due regard to the wishes of the people there and the population is sufficient, we shall have the remarkable spectacle of a little strip that is neither in Nebraska nor Dakota nor anywhere else. I think it should be put in the State of Nebraska at once. I can see no reason why it should not be; and it certainly will be found eventually to make a great deal of trouble. But the Senators who have this bill in charge and who are especially anxious about its passage, do not seem to be willing that that should be done, I suppose for fear that it would embarrass the bill. I do not intend to make any factious opposition to it. I have just stated what I think about the measure.

Mr. Allison [Iowa]. As I understand this bill, it makes no change whatever in the existing status until the Indian title shall have been extinguished; therefore I take it that if Dakota should be admitted as a State next year, this Territory would be within the boundary of Dakota for the time being.

Mr. Teller. If that is the fact, we shall have a very remarkable condition of affairs. This will be in Dakota, and whether it remains in Dakota or not depends upon the action with reference to the extinguishment of the Indian title. Why not put it now in Nebraska? It will not interfere with the relations of the Indians to the Government. If it will, guard with such language as may be proper, and see that it shall not.

Mr. Edmunds. It rather strikes me that it would be wise to fix a time within which the State of Nebraska shall assent as is provided in this amendment, because giving her an unlimited time within which to assent, it puts it conditionally out of our power and out of the power of Dakota in arranging for the admission of that State hereafter. Therefore I think it would be reasonable to provide where



the assent of the State of Nebraska is spoken of—which is necessary as it changes her boundary—that that assent shall be given within a certain period of time.

Mr. Saunders. I have no objection to that.

Mr. Edmunds. When does the Legislature of Nebraska meet?

Mr. Saunders. It meets next winter.

Mr. Edmunds. If we provide that the assent shall be given within one year from the passage of this act, it would give the Legislature an opportunity to act. After the word “act”, in line 19, I move to insert “which assent shall be given within one year from the passage hereof.”

Mr. Saunders. I have no objection to that.

Mr. Edmunds. I think that is right. It will not embarrass it.

The amendment to the amendment was agreed to.

The President *pro tempore*. The question now is on the amendment reported by the Committee on Territories as amended.

Mr. Dawes. Before we vote on it, I should like to hear the amendment read as amended.

The Chief Clerk read the amendment as amended.

The amendment, as amended, was agreed to.

The bill was reported to the Senate as amended, and the amendment was concurred in.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, read the third time, and passed.

On the 5th of June the bill was taken up in the house and referred to the committee on the judiciary.<sup>7</sup> It had not been reported back when the forty-sixth congress finally adjourned on the 16th of June.

On the first day of the first session of the 47th congress, Senator Saunders, who in the meantime had become chairman of the senate committee on territories, introduced the bill avowedly in the form in which it had passed the senate at the last session, but as senate bill number 17.<sup>8</sup> When

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pt. 4, p. 3644.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., pt. 5, p. 4220.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., v. 13, pt. 1, p. 3.



the senator undertook to call up the bill on the 31st of January, 1882, he explained his wish to have it considered hastily as follows:

Mr. Saunders. This bill is the same exactly that passed the Senate unanimously at the last session of Congress after having been thoroughly canvassed, and it has been reported unanimously by the Committee on Territories again. The hurry we have in this matter is that it cannot take effect, according to one of the conditions, until the Legislature of the State of Nebraska shall have acted on it, and the Legislature expects to be called together early this spring. As the bill will have to go through the other House, and then notice must be given to the governor of Nebraska, I desire very much that the bill shall be allowed to go through this morning. I think there is no objection to it.

But the wily senator from Vermont again interfered, and the following colloquy ensued:

Mr. Edmunds. It is a pretty serious business to enlarge or diminish the boundaries of a sovereign State, and it is still more serious if, as I have been told, this enlargement of the boundaries of Nebraska is to take in both an Indian reservation and a military reservation; and before I vote to take it up, I should be glad to have the Senator from Nebraska tell us whether I am correctly informed that this is to bring within the jurisdictional territory of Nebraska a reservation already set apart for some Indians along that border.

Mr. Saunders. It provides that it shall not take effect until the Indian title shall have been extinguished.

Mr. Edmunds. That was not precisely the question. I asked whether this change of boundary does not bring into the State of Nebraska an Indian reservation already established, on which the Indians are living in peace and quiet.

Mr. Saunders. It is called the Indian reservation, though it is that part which was held by the Poncas, and some mistakes were made, they claim, when it was turned over to the Sioux; but call it a reservation or what you please, it is no doubt a part of the Indian reservation, and

in that regard it is provided that the bill shall not take effect until the Indian title shall have been extinguished.

Mr. Edmunds. What is the object of this enlargement of the boundaries of the State of Nebraska? What good does it do? Why is it necessary?

Mr. Saunders. It is merely to straighten the line and bring in a very irregularly formed piece of land. It will not help the Territory of Nebraska particularly.

Mr. Ingalls. It is very important that all States should have straight lines, rectangular frontiers; but I am advised that this proposed change takes in the capital of the Territory of Dakota. Is that the case?

Mr. Saunders. The capital of Dakota is on the east side of the Missouri River, and this all lies west of the Missouri River, so that it does not touch it or come within a long distance of it.

Mr. Edmunds. Mr. President—

The President *pro tempore*. The morning hour has expired. The Chair lays before the Senate its unfinished business.

Mr. Saunders. I ask unanimous consent to take a vote on this bill this morning.

Mr. Edmunds. The Senator cannot get it this morning. The present boundary line of Nebraska follows the stream—

Mr. Saunders. The bill is just to straighten that line. [Indicating on a map.]

Mr. Kellogg [Louisiana]. I desire to inquire of the Chair if I have lost my opportunity now, the morning hour having expired, to call up a resolution?

The President *pro tempore*. The Senator has.

Mr. Kellogg. I desire to say that I yielded as a matter of courtesy to my good-natured friend from Nebraska, and I hope he will not ask me to do so again.

Mr. Saunders. I only want to rectify this boundary.

Mr. Edmunds. Regular order!<sup>9</sup>

Senator Saunders was sharply cross-examined on the

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., pp. 745-46. The rather notorious carpetbag senator from Louisiana, William Pitt Kellogg, who engaged in this debate, had been a judge of the territorial court of Nebraska.

bill, in committee of the whole, just before it was reported for a third reading.

Mr. Saulsbury [Delaware]. I should like to ask the senator from Nebraska who has title or claim now to the land that it is proposed to incorporate into the state of Nebraska? Is it public land?

Mr. Saunders. It belongs to the government; that is, it is included in an Indian reservation.

Mr. Saulsbury. Then this is a proposition to take part of an Indian reservation and incorporate it in the state of Nebraska?

Mr. Saunders. The provision of the bill is that it does not take effect until the Indian title is extinguished, so that is all provided for in the bill.

Mr. Saulsbury. Then it is to give the public lands to the state of Nebraska, which I understand has a large territory now?

Mr. Saunders. No; under the bill the government will have the right to control the lands.

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Mr. Plumb [Kansas]. I should like to inquire why it is that the State of Nebraska has not by some home authority made some profert of its wishes in regard to this matter, and I should like to ask further what is the feeling of the people of Dakota about it? We are taking away what is apparently valuable property from the Territory of Dakota, which is here seeking admission as a State. It seems to me we ought to have regard for the wishes of those people, and the fact that the State of Nebraska apparently never has put in an appearance here or asked anything about it ought to enter into the considerations bearing upon this question.

Mr. Saunders. This bill was before the Senate more than a year ago, almost two years ago, and it was thoroughly canvassed both in committee and in the Senate. Seven times, I think, it was up and finally it was adopted exactly as reported, and the amendments which have been agreed to this morning [February 3, 1882] were suggested by the Senator from Vermont, and remove all possible objection to the measure. So far as the territory is concerned it



belongs to an Indian reservation, and there are no persons particularly affected by it, because there are no white people upon the reservation, and I do not know that there are any Indians on it now.

The object of the bill is to straighten the line between Dakota and Nebraska. If the line had been straight, or if there had been a well-defined line, no bill would have been brought before Congress in regard to the matter. The bill provides that the line shall go up the Niobrara River to the mouth of the Keyapaha River. The Niobrara River in many places there is a very wide and shallow stream, changing its channel frequently. Sometimes in twenty-four hours the channel has been removed a quarter of a mile or more. So difficult has it been to decide what is the real channel of that stream, that one of the judges in that district told me himself that he had released a prisoner and refused to act upon the case because he would not take it upon himself to decide the northern boundary of Nebraska where it was the main channel of that stream, because it was so difficult to tell where the channel was.

For these and other reasons, the main reason being to straighten the line (which would have been done when the act was passed originally if Congress had known anything about where it would be,) and not for the purpose alone of attaching territory to Nebraska, I ask for the passage of the bill. It does not affect anybody's interest particularly, but straightens the line and gives the map an appearance which it would not have without this enactment.

Mr. Cameron, of Wisconsin. I desire to inquire of the Senator from Nebraska how extensive the territory is which it is proposed by the bill to transfer from the Territory of Dakota to the State of Nebraska; that is, how many square miles does it contain?

Mr. Saunders. I cannot tell exactly, but it is about forty miles in length and probably there is a mean width of about three miles, perhaps not quite so much. There are, I think, over two townships of land, but it is in such an irregular shape that I cannot tell exactly the quantity.

Mr. Hale [Maine]. Is there any population there whatever?



Mr. Saunders. There is no population there, and no population is affected by the bill at all.

Mr. Teller. I should like to inquire if the Indians are not affected by it?

Mr. Saunders. Not the Indians themselves.

Mr. Dawes. The Indians have all been removed to the Indian Territory.

Mr. Edmunds. At the point of the bayonet.

Mr. Dawes. They have been removed at the point of the bayonet, so that the bill does not affect them.

Mr. Butler [South Carolina]. I think it is fair to say in behalf of the bill that it was considered by the Committee on Territories and unanimously reported favorably. My friend from Kansas [Mr. Plumb] made an inquiry as to what the feeling of the people of Dakota is upon the subject. The only information I have on that point is that quite a large delegation of very intelligent gentlemen from Dakota was before the Committee on Territories, where this matter was informally discussed, although not specially with reference to this line, and no objection was made to it by them that I could hear. I think the bill is an entirely proper one for the reasons assigned by the chairman of the committee, and I hope the Senate will pass it. I do not see that it can affect the Indians, as their rights are thoroughly protected by the proviso. It simply straightens the line and gives symmetry to the northern line of the State of Nebraska. That is about all there is in it.

The bill was reported to the Senate as amended.

Mr. Pendleton [Ohio]. Let the bill be read in full.

The Acting Secretary read the bill.

Mr. Edmunds. The Senator from Iowa [Mr. Allison] has just suggested to me, and I think with great wisdom, that this grant of territory should be subject to all the provisions in regard to the admission of the State of Nebraska into the Union. The only real point about it that I can now think of would be as to reserving the free navigation of the Missouri River. I do not remember how the old acts in regard to the States that border on the Mississippi and the Missouri run, whether their jurisdiction is extended to the center, to the main channel, or whether to the shore.

Mr. Saunders. To the main channel.

Mr. Edmunds. If it is extended to the main channel, then there should be what was, I am sure, in the earlier acts in regard to these States, a provision that would make the whole of the river free for navigation, &c., to all the people of the United States. Undoubtedly if we had a provision subjecting this tract to all the conditions and limitations of the original act of admission, it would probably cover the point, although I have not looked at the law. At any rate I will move to insert, after the word "Nebraska", in line 10, the words "and subject to all the conditions and limitations provided in the act of Congress admitting Nebraska into the Union." That will probably secure what I have in view.

The President *pro tempore*. The question is on agreeing on the amendment of the Senator from Vermont.

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. Dawes. I think the safeguards that have been put upon the bill are very desirable. As to the question of extending the boundary, I think any one who looks upon the map will see the propriety of it. The bill includes in the State of Nebraska just the old Ponca reservation, about which so much was said in the last Congress. It does not affect the title to that reservation, which has never by any legal means been taken out of the Ponca tribe. I suppose there can be no doubt in the mind of lawyers that it still remains there. The Ponca tribe have been driven off; no one inhabits the reservation now, and their dwellings, those that have not been carried over this river by enterprising settlers in Nebraska, have been swept down the river by the floods that have been described by the Senator from Nebraska. But the rights of the Indians, whatever they are, do not seem to be affected by the bill, and the straightening of the line of Nebraska does seem to be very desirable. I hope, therefore, the bill will pass.

The President *pro tempore*. Does the Senator from Vermont propose any further amendment?

Mr. Edmunds. I think that the provision we have inserted is adequate to the purpose I had in view.

The bill was reported to the Senate as amended, and the amendments were concurred in.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading, read the third time, and passed.<sup>10</sup>

In the house the bill was referred to the committee on the territories;<sup>11</sup> but it was sponsored by Mr. Valentine (then the sole member from Nebraska), though he was not a

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 861.

The queries of Senator Plumb and Senator Butler as to the reason why Dakota showed no interest in the proposed dismemberment of her territory are sufficiently answered, probably, in letters to the editor from Mr. Ed. A. Fry, founder of the *Nebraska Pioneer*, and now a resident of Yankton, under dates of September 12 and 14, and October 11, 1913. Mr. Fry said:

"In regard to what we know of the 'Ponca Strip,' comprising the west part of Knox and all of Boyd, it was the child of the late Alvin Saunders while a member of the Indian and territorial committees in the U. S. senate, and was done to straighten out the Nebraska boundary to the Missouri river. I recall no opposition from Dakota Territory, but E. K. Valentine made a strenuous effort to get credit for it, and quite a controversy arose over it, in which I was a part.

"Mr. [George W.] Kingsbury, who was editor of the *Press and Dakotan* at the time, tells me that there was no protest from South Dakota respecting the 'Ponca Strip.' The territory at that time was more interested in division than the 96,000 acres of land, and Senator Saunders was in position to aid them and did so. He says that Senator Plumb of Kansas, as the Congressional Record at that time will show, made some inquiries in debate, but beyond this no effort was made lest opposition might be made to division.

"Mr. Van Osdel says there was no contention on the part of the South Dakota delegate. As before stated, he said statehood was uppermost in the minds of the leaders. Niobrara, of course, had a desire at that time to see this territory come into Nebraska on account of the Niobrara river, that it might come under the exclusive control of the state. The Ponca treaty did not even give Nebraska the river, reading to the south bank as the line of the Ponca possession.

"As to Congressman Valentine's claim of the shifting channel of the Niobrara river, this is correct. It is liable to be on the opposite side of the stream over-night—this is where it spreads out to any extent. There are occasional confined rapids after the turn in the river about five miles above. These do not shift materially. It is a remarkable river, in that it seldom, if ever, leaves its banks unless gorged by ice. It is a spring-fed stream its whole length and is probably the least affected by drouth or flood of any stream known."

Dakota was not divided until 1889, when it was changed from the territorial status into the states of North Dakota and South Dakota. Therefore, the delegate to congress was from Dakota and not from South Dakota as Mr. Fry inadvertently has it.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pt. 2, p. 1501.



member of the committee. The colloquy in the house was brief:

Mr. Valentine. I ask unanimous consent for the present consideration of a senate bill. If the house will give me a moment for a statement of the case, I think there will be no objection.

The Speaker. The Clerk will read the title of the bill.

The clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. No. 17) to extend the northern boundary of the State of Nebraska.

Mr. Valentine. I would like to have a moment to state the object of this bill.

Mr. Springer [Illinois]. I reserve points of order.

Mr. Bragg [Wisconsin]. And I reserve the right to object.

Mr. Valentine. Mr. Speaker, it is intended by this bill to straighten the northern boundary of the state of Nebraska. A portion of the present northern boundary is down the Keyapaha and the Niobrara Rivers. The Niobrara is a shallow sandy stream, from half a mile to a mile and a quarter in width, full of timber islands. Under the present law the northern boundary of our state down that stream is the main channel of the stream. That channel shifts with the wind. When the wind is blowing from the north or the northwest the channel is upon the southern bank of the stream. If the wind shifts to the south or southwest the channel moves from half a mile to a mile and a quarter northward around these islands. It is very necessary to have a fixed, well-defined boundary line. I will add that there is no objection to this bill on the part of the people of Dakota who are as much interested in having this line straightened as are the people of Nebraska.

Mr. Dunnell [Minnesota]. Has this bill been examined by the House committee?

Mr. Valentine. Yes, sir; they have had it under consideration, and allowed me to take it from the hands of the committee to bring it up at this time.

The bill was read, as follows:

*Be it enacted, &c.,* That the northern boundary of the State of Nebraska shall be, and hereby is, subject to the



provisions hereinafter contained, extended so as to include all that portion of the Territory of Dakota lying south of the forty-third parallel of north latitude and east of the Keyapaha River and west of the main channel of the Missouri River; and when the Indian title to the lands thus described shall be extinguished, the jurisdiction over said lands shall be, and hereby is, ceded to the State of Nebraska, and subject to all the conditions and limitations provided in the act of Congress admitting Nebraska into the Union; and the northern boundary of the State shall be extended to said forty-third parallel as fully and effectually as if said lands had been included in the boundaries of said State at the time of its admission to the Union, reserving to the United States the original right of soil in said lands and of disposing of the same: *Provided*, That this act, so far as jurisdiction is concerned, shall not take effect until the President shall, by proclamation, declare that the Indian title to said lands has been extinguished, nor shall it take effect until the State of Nebraska shall have assented to the provisions of this act; and if the State of Nebraska shall not, by an act of its Legislature, consent to the provisions of this act within two years next after the passage hereof, this act shall cease and be of no effect.

Mr. Springer. How much territory is to be added to the State by this change?

Mr. Valentine. About a township and a half.

There being no objection, the Committee on the Territories was discharged from the further consideration of the bill; which was ordered to a third reading, read the third time, and passed.<sup>12</sup>

The process of coaching this measure followed, now and then, darksome ways. For example, Senator Saunders declared that the second bill—which was enacted—“is the same exactly that passed the senate unanimously at the last session of congress after having been thoroughly canvassed. . .” On the contrary, it was the bill as it was originally reported, without the numerous amendments

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., p. 2007.

which were made "after having been thoroughly canvassed" on the 3d of May, 1880. The bill, with amendments, which first passed the senate and to which Senator Saunders referred has already been copied (ante, pp. 66, 67, 68).<sup>13</sup>

The bill which the senator offered the second time was as follows:

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the northern boundary of the State of Nebraska shall be, and hereby is, extended so as to include all that portion of the Territory of Dakota lying south of the forty-third parallel of north latitude and east of the Keyapaha River and west of the main channel of the Missouri River; and when the Indian title to the lands thus described shall be extinguished, the jurisdiction over said lands shall be and hereby is ceded to the State of Nebraska, and the northern boundary of the State shall be, and hereby is, extended to said forty-third parallel as fully and effectually as if said lands had been included in the boundaries of said State at the time of its admission to the Union; reserving to the United States the original right of soil in said lands and of disposing of the same: Provided, That this act, so far as jurisdiction is concerned, shall not take effect until the President shall, by proclamation, declare that the Indian title to said lands has been extinguished, nor shall it take effect until the State of Nebraska shall have assented to the provisions of this act.*<sup>14</sup>

The words "hereby is" occurred three times in the bill before it was amended, in 1880, by striking them out. They were stricken out in only one instance, just before final passage. Thus the senator gained two important points, to which strong objections had been made in the debate on amendments, by slipping in cards from his sleeve.

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<sup>13</sup> The bill and the amendments adopted are printed on page 3644, pt. 4, v. 10, Congressional Record.

<sup>14</sup> The elimination of the amendments adopted (Congressional Record, v. 13, pt. 1, pp. 860-861) from the act as it passed (U. S. Statutes at Large, v. 22, p. 35) leaves the bill as it was introduced.

The words, "so far as jurisdiction is concerned," which were stricken out at the instance of Senator Hoar before the passage of the first bill in the senate, slipped by on final passage through Saunder's masterly mistake as to the contents of the bill. By the same misapprehension the senator got rid of the amendments, "if it [the Indian title] ever shall be extinguished"; "nor shall this act create any liability or obligation of any kind whatever on the part of the United States to extinguish said Indian title or in any way affect the title thereto"; and "*and provided further*, That this act shall in no way affect the right of the United States to control any military or other reservation, or any part thereof, which may now or hereafter be on said land." By leaving out the one year limit for accepting another year was gained. Thus Senator Saunders got back by indirection most of that which had been directly taken from him and, in a way, got even with the irreverent eastern senators who had so inconsiderately put and kept him on the gridiron.

There is an inexplicable discrepancy between Senator Saunders' estimates of the area of the proposed transfer in 1880 and in 1882. In response to Senator Thurman's specific inquiry during the discussion of the first bill Saunders replied: "It will make somewhere probably about eighteen townships."<sup>15</sup> To a like specific inquiry by Senator Cameron, of Wisconsin, during the debate of February 3d, 1882, Saunders replied: "There are, I think, over two townships of land, but it is in such an irregular shape that I cannot tell exactly the quantity."<sup>16</sup> On the day the bill

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<sup>15</sup> Congressional Record, v. 10, pt. 3, p. 2960. According to the census of 1880 the area of the state was 76,185 square miles, and by that of 1890 it was 76,855 square miles. The difference between these sums, 670 square miles, or 18.6 townships, is approximately the area of the transferred territory. According to the surveys, as indicated on the township plats, the total area of the addition appears to have been 406,566 acres, or 17.64 townships.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., v. 13, pt. 1, p. 861.



passed the house—March 17, 1882—to Mr. Springer's question, "How much territory is to be added to the state by this change?" Mr. Valentine replied: "About a township and a half."<sup>17</sup> The correctness of the Nebraska senator's first estimate and the near agreement between his second and Valentine's estimate precludes the supposition that either was a clerical error. The original boundary line between Dakota and Nebraska followed the mid-channel of the Niobrara river, so that Nebraska acquired by the transfer only such islands as lay north of that line.

The great and the near-great men who engaged in the debates alike lacked knowledge of the status or rights of the Indians in the debated territory. Senator Dawes, though chairman of the committee of Indian affairs and a general Indian godfather or philanthropist, very erroneously informed his uninformed colleagues that the bill included "just the old Ponca reservation," which was as discrepant from the truth as the information about the area of the whole tract offered by the members from Nebraska. Of the approximate total of 406,566 acres, the Ponca laid claim to only 96,000.<sup>18</sup>

The claims of neighboring Indian tribes to lands naturally overlapped one another until the authority of the United States adjusted them, more or less arbitrarily, through treaties. Until the Fort Laramie treaty of 1851, the Ponca claimed the territory bounded by a line running westerly from the mouth of Aoway river to the Black Hills; thence along the Black Hills to the source of White river; thence down the White river to the Missouri, which was their eastern boundary.<sup>19</sup> By the same treaty, a line drawn

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., pt. 2, p. 2007.

<sup>18</sup> Report of the secretary of the interior 1881, v. 2, p. 277; *ibid.*, 1878, pt. 1, p. 467; *ibid.*, 1879, v. 1, p. 78.

<sup>19</sup> Eighteenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, pt. 2, p. 819.



southwesterly from the mouth of White river (now in South Dakota not far below the city of Chamberlain) through the forks of the Platte was fixed as the eastern boundary of Sioux territory and so the western boundary of Ponka claims.<sup>20</sup> By the treaty of March 12, 1858, the Ponka ceded to the United States all lands they owned or claimed except a tract bounded as follows: "Beginning at a point on the Niobrara river and running due north so as to intersect the Ponca River twenty-five miles from its mouth; thence from said point of intersection up and along the Ponca River twenty miles; thence due south to the Niobrara River; and thence down and along said river to the place of beginning. . ." Through a mistake in the wording of the treaty this reservation was placed farther west than the contracting parties intended; consequently, in accordance with the request of the commissioner of Indian affairs, made on the 26th of July, 1860, the commissioner of the general land office ordered that the east and west boundaries should be removed twelve miles eastward. By this change the line between ranges 8 and 9 west of the sixth principal meridian became the eastern boundary of the reservation.<sup>21</sup> By the treaty of March 10, 1865, the Ponka ceded to the United States that part of their reservation west of the line between ranges 10 and 11 and received as consideration therefor the tract between the Ponka river and the Niobrara river east of the line between ranges 8 and 9, subsequently the western boundary of Knox county.<sup>22</sup>

The recitation in the treaty that this cession was made also "by way of rewarding them for their constant fidelity to the government and citizens thereof, and with a view of

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.; Copy of treaty, U. S. Statutes at Large, v. 12, p. 997.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., pp. 836-37; U. S. Statutes at Large, v. 14, p. 675; Report Secretary of Interior 1879, v. 1, p. 78.

returning to the said tribe of Ponca Indians their old burying grounds and cornfields" is characteristically ironical, in view of the fact that, by an alleged mistake, the whole reservation, sacred and otherwise, was included in the great reserve assigned to the Sioux by the trouble-breeding treaty of April 29, 1868.<sup>23</sup> The bill of appropriations of 1876 for the Indian department contained a proviso "that the secretary of the interior may use of the foregoing amounts the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars for the removal of the Poncas to the Indian Territory, and providing them a home therein, with the consent of said band." The corresponding bill of 1877 contained an appropriation of fifteen thousand dollars "for the removal and permanent location of the Poncas in the Indian territory."<sup>24</sup>

The precedent condition of consent was omitted from the second removal measure because an agent of the department had failed, in the preceding January, to obtain it, though he resorted to intimidation to gain a nefarious end. Accordingly, in April and May of the same year, the Ponka were forced from their ancestral homes, literally "at the point of the bayonet", as asserted by Senator Edmunds and Senator Dawes.<sup>25</sup> In 1879 sixty-five of the homesick exiles deserted from the new reservation in the Indian Territory, and by 1882 one hundred and sixty-eight of them had returned to their old reservation.<sup>26</sup> A sense of this injustice gradually came to be comprehended, and at the second session of the 46th congress (Feb. 16, 1880) Senator

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<sup>23</sup> U. S. Statutes at Large, v. 15, p. 636.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 19, pp. 192, 287.

<sup>25</sup> Report of special investigation commission, in the report of the secretary of the interior 1881, v. 2, p. 278.

<sup>26</sup> Report of Secretary of Interior 1879, v. 1, pp. 21, 77, 179; *ibid.*, 1882, v. 2, p. 176. For extended accounts of the removal, see reports of the secretary of the interior, 1877, pp. 417, 492; 1878, p. 466; 1879, v. 1, pp. 21, 78, 179; 1880, v. 1, p. 110; 1881, v. 2, pp. 38, 186, 275; 1882, v. 2, pp. 52, 176.

Dawes introduced a bill (s. 1298)<sup>27</sup> for the relief of the Ponka, which was referred to the select committee to examine into the removal of the Northern Cheyenne and by it reported back favorably, when it was placed upon the calendar where it rested.<sup>28</sup> At the 3d session of the same congress (January 28, 1881) Senator Dawes introduced a bill (s. 2113) "to establish the rights of the Ponca tribe of Indians and to settle their affairs", which was referred to the same committee.<sup>29</sup> On the 23d of February Senator Kirkwood, on behalf of a minority of that committee, introduced a bill (s. 2215) "for the relief of the Ponca Indians."<sup>30</sup> On the 18th of December, 1880, President Hayes appointed a commission consisting of Brigadier General George Crook, Brigadier General Nelson A. Miles, William Stickney, of the District of Columbia, and Walter Allen, of Massachusetts, "to ascertain the facts in regard to their [the Ponka's] removal and present condition, so far as is necessary to determine the question what justice and humanity require should be done by the government of the United States, and report their conclusions and recommendations in the premises." The commission made a majority and a minority report on the 25th of January, 1881, which were referred to the committee named above. Both reports represented that the Ponka had been wrongfully removed from their old reservation and recommended that, by way of restitution, one hundred and sixty acres of land, to be selected by them from their old reservation or

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<sup>27</sup> Congressional Record, v. 10, pt. 1, p. 912; *ibid.*, pt. 4, p. 3950. The department of Indian affairs presented to congress a liberal bill for the same purpose on the 3d of February, 1879. (Report Secretary of Interior 1879, v. 1, p. 78).

<sup>28</sup> Kirkwood of Iowa; Dawes of Massachusetts; Plumb of Kansas; Bailey of Tennessee; Morgan of Alabama. (Cong. Record, v. 10, pt. 1, p. 19—2d sess. 46th Congress).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, v. 11, pt. 2, p. 988.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pt. 3, p. 1965.



from their new one in the Indian Territory, should be given to every member of the tribe and in addition thereto, that the annual appropriation of \$53,000 should be continued for five years after the passage of an act allotting them lands, and that \$25,000 should be appropriated for the purpose of providing farm implements, stock and seed.<sup>31</sup> Carl Schurz, secretary of the interior, was a firm friend of the Ponka, and in his reports for 1877, 1879, and 1880, he warmly advocated that they should be reimbursed for the loss of their reservation.

The Sioux gave evidence of contrition on account of their part in the cruel treatment of this defenseless little band of former kinsmen, and on the 20th of August, 1881, representatives of the Ogalala, Brulé, and Standing Rock tribes signed an agreement at Washington to relinquish enough of the old Ponka reservation to provide heads of families and males over twenty-one years of age, belonging to the Standing Bear band and residing on or near the old reservation, a section of land apiece. But the requisite signatures of three-fourths of all the adult male Sioux interested in the reservation were apparently not obtained.<sup>32</sup> It was not until 1888 that the demand of justice to the Ponka was substantially recognized. The act of congress of April 30 of that year, which divided the great Sioux reservation into six distinct reserves, contained the following provision:

"Each member of the Ponka tribe of Indians now occupying a part of the old Ponka reservation, within the limits of said great Sioux reservation, shall be entitled to allotments upon said old Ponka reservation as follows:

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<sup>31</sup> Senate Documents 1880-81, v. 1, doc. 30, pp. 1-13. The proceedings of the Commission, including the testimony of representatives of the tribe, are published in the same document, beginning at page 13, and in Senate Miscellaneous Documents, 1880-81, v. 1, document 49.

<sup>32</sup> House Executive Documents, 1881-82, v. 10, doc. 1, p. 39; *ibid.*, 1882-83, v. 11, p. 52.



To each head of a family, one-quarter of a section; to each single person over eighteen years of age, one-eighth of a section; to each orphan child under eighteen years of age, one-eighth of a section; and to each other person under eighteen years now living, one-sixteenth of a section. . . . And said Poncas shall be entitled to all other benefits under this act in the same manner and with the same conditions as if they were a part of the Sioux nation receiving rations at one of the agencies herein named."

The Sioux, however, refused to ratify this provision, and so it did not become effective. A provision for the same purpose was incorporated in the act of March 2, 1889, further dividing and curtailing the Sioux reservation; and it was accepted by the Sioux according to its conditions. By this act, each head of a Ponca family then occupying a part of the old Ponca reservation was granted three hundred and twenty acres of said reservation; each single person over eighteen years of age, one-fourth of a section; each orphan child under eighteen years of age, one-fourth of a section; and each other person under eighteen years of age now living one-eighth of a section.<sup>33</sup> Accordingly, 27,236 acres of the land in question were allotted to one hundred and sixty-eight Indians,<sup>34</sup> and thereupon, on the 23d of October, 1890, President Benjamin Harrison issued a proclamation which declared that "the Indian title is extinguished to all lands described in said act of March 28, 1882, not allotted to the Ponca Indians. . ." In the proclamation the president reserved from entry "that tract of land now occupied by the agency and school buildings of the old Ponca agency, to-wit: the south half of the south-east quarter of section twenty-six, and the south half of the southwest quarter of section twenty-five, all in town-

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<sup>33</sup> U. S. Statutes at Large, v. 25, pp. 99, 892.

<sup>34</sup> Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1911, Interior Department, Administrative Reports, v. 2, p. 82.

ship thirty-two north, range seven west of the sixth principal meridian.”<sup>35</sup> The act of 1889, cited above, provided for relinquishment by the Sioux.

This was the final act of the acquisition comedy, and also of the Ponka tragedy. Though the domains of the Ponka of Nebraska were greatly circumscribed by the white man's more urgent land-hunger and superior power, yet they received generous additional gifts in money and goods, and their selection of land is said to have been wise.

“The Ponca Indians located at this agency are fortunate in having good land. Nearly all the land taken by these Indians is situated along the Niobrara or Running Water river and Ponca creek, and lies mostly in broad and fertile valleys, just undulating enough to have good drainage.” “They have received a large body of the choicest land on the reservation.”<sup>36</sup>

No longer harassed by Sioux ferocity or fear of rapine by their white fellow citizens, they are slowly increasing in numbers. Their aggregate in 1912 was three hundred.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> U. S. Statutes at Large v. 26, p. 1560.

<sup>36</sup> Statements of the agent and of the teacher, Report of the Secretary of the Interior 1890, v. 2, pp. 146, 147.

<sup>37</sup> Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1912, Interior Department, Administrative Reports, v. 2, p. 76.

## ADDRESSES BY JAMES MOONEY

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[Delivered at the annual meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society, January 10-11, 1911.]

### LIFE AMONG THE INDIAN TRIBES OF THE PLAINS

It has been announced that I am to speak of my life with the Indian tribes of the plains. That is a very large subject and could not be exhausted in an evening's talk. I shall not attempt to go into details, but try merely to suggest a few things of Indian life that may help to give you an impression that an Indian community is not a mere aggregation of individuals, but is an organization, and that Indian life runs along channels as definite as those of civilized life.

The Indian is more than an Indian; he is a member of a tribe; and each tribe is practically a small, distinct nation, usually with a distinct language. In North and South America we have nobody knows how many tribes, because they never have been counted. We have at least a thousand different languages: putting it in another shape, we may say there are a thousand ways to say the word "dog" in Indian. In Europe there are not more than fifty languages. In the United States we had over two hundred distinct Indian languages, each unintelligible to those speaking the others. Most of these languages are still in existence; but some of them have been wiped out.

I have been with tribes all the way from Dakota to central Mexico, and west into Arizona and Nevada; but the most of my work and acquaintance has been with the

tribes of the southern plains, more particularly with the Kiowa. After them I was, on the plains, chiefly with the Cheyenne, Arapaho, Comanche, Sioux, Caddo, and Wichita. I have been with Navaho, Hopi, Piute, Pueblos, one or two tribes in Mexico and several remnant tribes; but of all I know best the Kiowa, having lived with them as a member of an Indian family for several years of my first western experience, and having visited them since every year, staying with them a large part of each year.

The Kiowa originally came from the north, somewhere near the head of the Missouri river, but within the historic period they have ranged along the plains from the Black Hills in Dakota southward. They are great riders and make long distances in traveling. I have known of one band of them starting from Kansas to go up into Montana for a couple of years, while another band went south into Mexico; and while there made a raid on the city of Durango. So their range must have been something like two thousand miles north and south. As a general rule they kept on the plains and did not go into timbered country.

To go into detail of Indian life, as I have seen it, would take a long time. I might give you one or two days of the winter camp, and one or two days of the summer camp. It was customary, years ago, for the roaming tribes to stay out on the open prairie throughout the summer season. They scattered about, but generally camped near some convenient spring in the neighborhood of grass and timber. There parties from other tribes would come and visit them, sometimes hundreds together, and they would have a dance. The Kiowa now live in southwestern Oklahoma. Anadarko, their agency, has now about six thousand people. When I first knew it, it had about fifty whites—agency employees, two or three traders, and a few missionaries—all the rest were Indians; but the Indians stayed there only a part of the time as a rule. Along late



in the fall they would come down, one camp after another, all within a week or so, setting up their tipis close to Anadarko, in the timber along the bottom lands on the south side of the Washita river. Some of you have read General Custer's work, "My Life On The Plains", and will remember that he tells about the battles which he fought with the Cheyenne, Kiowa, and other tribes in this part of the country.

In the winter camp the tipis were set up and strung out from five to eight miles along the river. Sometimes around the tipi they would build a windbreak, made of interwoven brush. If the timber was pretty close they did not need to make a windbreak. I first joined them in the winter camp and remember distinctly my first night there. The headman was presiding at the supper and dishing out soup, and he asked me if I did not think it was good; but I was wondering how it was possible for any one to eat it. The soup was made of jerked beef, cut into small pieces and cooked in salted water. With the soup they had bread, made by mixing flour with water and frying it in a pan over a hole in the ground. In the Indian sign language the sign for bread is this—(indicating the smoothing of the cake with the hands). They call coffee "black soup".

Our family had two tipis, each set up with twenty poles and with three beds around the circle inside. The old man had been one of the war chiefs in his best days, which gave him a reputation outside of his own tribe. He was known as one of their best story-tellers and master of ceremonies; and he was also a "beef chief" or distributor of the beef rations. He was the grandfather, and after we became acquainted he called me his son. He had three daughters and a son, all married, who with the husbands, wives and children made a family of sixteen, besides myself. The Indians were constantly visiting from one camp to another, so that we were not all together all the time; but we usually had one or two visitors to make up.

In the center of the tipi there was a hole in the ground for the fire, where the cooking was done, and the three beds were facing it. The bed consisted of a platform about a foot above the ground, covered with a mat of peeled willow rods laid lengthwise, and looped up at one end in hammock fashion. You may have seen some of these Indian bed platforms in museum collections. The bed is covered with buffalo skins and there is a pillow at one end. If you ever have a chance to see one of these beds and examine it carefully, you will find that each of the willow rods is fastened to the other in a very unique way, the narrow top end of one rod alternating with the thicker bottom end of the next rod, so as to preserve an even balance. (Here the speaker gave a diagram, and described this bed platform, and the particular construction of it.)

After dark we have supper, and then, when they are through telling stories and shaking the rattle, we go to bed.

In the morning one of the women gets up and, in winter, takes her bucket and ax and goes down to the river for water. If it is not too cold she dips it up; if the river is frozen, she has to break the ice. While she is about that her sister has brought in some wood and made the fire. They do not pile the wood on as we do, but push the sticks endways into the fire. So arranged they give out a uniform heat. The tipi is very comfortable in winter, more so than most of the poorly built frontier houses. We had three women in our family besides the old grandmother. While one went after the water and the other after the wood, the third prepared the breakfast. They make bread hot for every meal, baking it in the pan, with tallow for grease. The regular ration issue every two weeks consisted of beef, flour, coffee and sugar. A few days after the rations are issued the meat which is eaten with it gives out, and then there is only the flour and coffee. They use the black coffee, which is always made fresh.

Sometimes they have sugar, but never cream. The Indian woman is as good a coffee maker as you will find anywhere. When breakfast is ready they spread out a piece of canvas or something of the kind in front of the bed platforms and set out on it the dishes and cups. They have these things from the traders now. They formerly used bowls and spoons. The food is divided and handed around by the woman who is the head of the household. After the meal is over a cloth is passed around for a napkin. When they had nothing else, I have seen them use dry grass tied up into a knot.

After breakfast they arrange the work for the day. The women look after the children and do the sewing. Their clothing is made of cheap calico or of buckskin, the latter being sewn with sinew taken from the backbone of the larger animals. An awl is used for a needle. Bead-work is done in the same way, the beads being strung on a sinew thread as a shoemaker handles his wax ends. While the women get to work, each man saddles his favorite pony and goes out to herd the range ponies. The Indian man's time is largely taken up with his pony. They are a worthless set of horses, usually, as very few of them are fit for heavy work, but they answer for riding purposes. They keep one pony tied near the camp to use in rounding up the others. It is hard for them to give up their horses. The man in whose family I lived had about forty. As they have no corrals, the ponies graze wherever they can find grass.

The children go out and play. When there is snow on the ground they slide downhill. Sometimes they have little darts to slide along on the ice. The young men practice arrow throwing. Three or four get together with arrows about four feet long—not the kind that they use for shooting, but an ornamented kind for throwing. One of them throws the arrow as far as he can, and then the



others try how near to where the first arrow is sticking in the ground they can lodge their own.

About the middle of the day they have dinner, which is about the same as breakfast. In the afternoon, if not too cold, the women take their work outside the tipi. After sewing perhaps an hour or so, they think it is about time to play, and so they start up the awl game. They play this game mostly in the winter. Upon the grass they spread a blanket, which has certain lines marked all around the edge, and a large flat stone at its center. There are four differently marked sticks, each one of which has a special name. They throw down all four sticks at once upon the stone and count so many tallies according to the markings on the sticks as they turn up. Each woman has an awl, and as she counts a tally she moves the awl up so many lines along the blanket. It sometimes happens that she scores a tally which brings her to the central line, when she is said to "fall into the river" and has to begin all over again. In this way they play until the game is finished, sometimes until nearly sunset, when it is time to think about supper.

They usually have supper, when there is anything to eat, rather late and after dark. It is about that time that the Indian day really begins. When supper is nearly ready the old grandfather, sitting inside the tipi, which is open at the top, announces by raising his voice so as to be heard outside, that he invites certain of the old men to come and smoke with him. The announcement is carried all through the camp. Then the old men who have been invited get out their pipes and start for the first man's tipi, so that by the time supper is ready there are three or four old men of the tribe gathered together for the evening, all of them full of reminiscences and stories.

The father of the family—not the old man, but the father of some of the children—usually takes that time to



give the children a little moral instruction. It is not generally known that the Indian father ever teaches his children about their duties; but he does, and it is usually done in that way and at that time, without addressing himself to any child in particular, and without any conversation in particular. Sitting there with his head down, without looking around, he begins a sort of recitation, telling the boys what they must soon be doing, and as men what might be expected of them. At another time the mother will tell the girls something to the same effect—what is expected of them now that they are growing old enough to know about these things.

Supper is a little more formal than the other meals, especially when there are visitors. During the mealtime not very much is said; but after it is over the old man who has invited his guests gets out his pipe and tobacco pouch, and they get out their tobacco and light their pipes. The ordinary Indian pipe is of red stone. It has a long stem, and there is a projection below the bowl, so as to rest it upon the ground, because when the Indian smokes he is sitting cross-legged upon the ground; therefore the pipe is just the right length for this purpose. He lights his pipe, and then raises it in turn to each of the cardinal points. On one occasion I remember one of the old men in our camp holding up the pipe to the sky, and saying, "*Behabe, Sint!*" (Smoke, Sint!), addressing a mystic trickster of the Kiowa tribe, of whom they tell many funny stories and say that at the end of his life on earth he ascended into the sky and became a star, so they offer their pipe to him in smoking at night. Immediately after saying this he raised his pipe to the sky again, and said, "*Behabe, Jesus!*" (Smoke, Jesus!). When the pipe is lighted it is passed around, and each man takes a whiff or two and hands it on to the next; and so it goes around the circle. After it has gone a round or two they begin to tell of the

old war times, just as grand army men tell stories of their war days. There are myths and fables, stories concerning warriors who have been noted for their bravery, and humorous stories which are told, usually by the old men, to amuse children. (Mr. Mooney here related one of these stories, similar to the fairy story of "Jack and the Beanstalk", and described a "hand game", similar to the game of "Button, button, who's got the button?") Stories are told by the old men and games played by the children until late in the night; and then, one after another, they retire. Those who remain are assigned their places for the night, the others going back to their own tipis, each one saying for goodbye, simply, "I'm going out"; and so closes one of the winter nights.

(Mr. Mooney now exhibited a number of views of Indian life and pictures of famous Indians, after which the meeting adjourned.)

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#### THE INDIAN WOMAN

Among Indians particular attention is given to everything relating to the birth of a child. Even in cutting the wood and shaping the pieces for the cradle, the sticks are placed in the cradle as they grew upward in the living tree, in order that the child may grow in the same way. While the father is making the cradle, the mother is busy preparing the little moccasins that the child will need. About the only sanitary precaution taken by the mother is the wearing of a tight belt about the body. When the child is born there is usually a woman nurse in attendance, a relative of the family of some professional ability. The newborn child is washed, usually in the running stream, and then is put into the cradle. It is not kept in the cradle through-

out the day, but only while the mother is going from one camp to another.

When the baby is about a year old its ears are pierced. In the summer season it often happens that a large party of visitors from some neighboring tribe will come down to dance for several weeks. Let us suppose that about five hundred Cheyenne are coming to visit with the Kiowa. The first intimation will be, as I have seen it, that a wagon drives up near to our camp and a strange man and woman get out, set up a little tent, and then sit down and await developments. Our women go into the tipi and prepare to receive them. After some time our man goes out to welcome the strangers and bring them up to our place for dinner. They cannot speak Kiowa; but in the sign language they tell us that a large party of their own tribe are on the way and close at hand, to visit the Kiowa and dance in their various camps. About the middle of the afternoon there is a great noise in the distance, out on the prairie. We look out and see several hundred Indians coming, the women and children in wagons, and the men, all in full buckskin, riding ahead, shouting and firing guns. When they get in, the wagons are unloaded, the tipis are set up, and then the visiting and the dancing begin, to continue for several weeks, from one camp to another. The ceremony of piercing the children's ears takes place at one of these dances. A priest of the visiting tribe does the work. The baby, dressed in a buckskin suit, is held up in the arms of its mother, and the old man pierces both of its ears with an awl. At that time, or very soon afterward, the grandmother of the child, or some other older relative, gives the child its name. The name of a girl is not very apt to change, but the name of a boy changes as he grows up, according to circumstances. The old man who pierces the ears receives as a fee a horse, a blanket or some other valuable gift of that kind. After the ears are bored the



father of the child asks the old man's prayers for the child, that it may have long life, health and success. He does this by laying both his hands upon the old man's head, who in turn puts his hands upon the head of the child, praying that it may grow up well formed and healthy and have long life.

The little girl has playmates as soon as she is old enough to run around with her older sisters and cousins. They are fond of swimming and in summer the boys and girls are in the water almost half the time. The little girls play house, and, with their dolls and toys, go visiting from one camp, or one tipi, to another. When the little girl goes visiting she ties all her dolls upon a stick to show them to her girl playmates. She has her pets too, usually a pony and a small dog, each of which has a name. One name that I remember for a little dun-colored pet pony was *Sai-guadal-i*, which means "Red Winter Baby". A pet dog in our family was called *Adal-kai-ma*, which means "Crazy Woman". The name of the child might be given from some incident connected with its birth. Thus one little girl in our family was named *Aisima*, which means "Tipi Track Woman". She was so called because she was born one night when her parents had camped on a former camp site, and had set up their tipi in the old tracks. The name of another little girl in our family was *Imguana*, which means "They are dancing". That is what might be called a medicine name, and has reference to a dream in which her grandfather had a vision of spirits in a dance.

As the girl grows older, about eight or ten years, she begins to help her mother in looking after the affairs of the household and learns to sew and do different kinds of beadwork. All beadwork and blanket weaving are done without any pattern, the woman carrying the patterns in her mind. As the buffalo tribes of the plains were roving about most of the time, they could not keep breakable



articles, and so did not make pottery. They had buckskin sewing and painted rawhide or panfleche work, such as valises and food bags. While learning to do all her mother's work, the little girl had also time to play. I have already spoken of the women's awl game. I have here some of their gaming outfits which may be seen after the meeting is over. Besides the awl game, the women have a football game of which they are very fond. The object in this game is not to send the ball as far as possible, but to keep it up in the air as long as possible by kicking it with the toe. Football and the awl game are the two most common games among the Indian girls, aside from playing with dolls and pets.

At times the girls go down to the creek bottom and cut the bark of a particular tree that grows there, a very small bushy tree with glassy leaves and gummy sap. They make chewing gum by beating up this bark and washing away the woody fiber in the creek. Indian girls are as fond as other girls of chewing gum. By the time the girl gets to be about twelve years old she is considered a young woman, and her mother is constantly talking to her about the duties of women, particularly in married life. She is supposed by that time to have learned all the household duties and the buckskin sewing; but there are other special arts of an expert nature which she learns later.

There is a puberty ceremony when the young woman comes to the proper age. This ceremony is often very arduous, especially with some tribes in southern California. With them a fire is built and a pit is dug and heated with hot stones from the fire. A bed of grass is laid on the bottom of the pit, and the young girls are stretched upon it and compelled to lie there almost without getting out for as long a time as a week. During this time they are not allowed to look at any one, and to prevent this a cover is placed over their eyes. All this time certain old women

are going around the mouth of the pit reciting chants which bear upon the future duties of the young girls. The longer the girl endures this ordeal the greater the honor. In most tribes the performance closes with a dance termed a puberty dance. In this way it is announced throughout the tribe that the young woman has made her entrance into society, and the young men take notice of it. She has grown up knowing the young men of her own camp and others who may visit back and forth, but if some young man thinks she has a special preference for him, as he has for her, he undertakes to get an idea of the state of her mind. It is a point of etiquette among the plains Indians, in social matters, that if you do not see anybody, nobody sees you. They do not have assembly rooms and parlors to meet in, but come together as they are going about in ordinary camp life. So when a young man has taken a fancy to this particular girl and wants to know whether she has any reciprocal feeling for him, he finds occasion to meet her. Having his blanket wrapt around him, as he comes up to the young girl he deliberately throws one end of it over her head. If she does not like him she forces him away. If she does like him she stands still, and with the blanket over both their heads they talk together awhile. There may be hundreds of people around, but nobody shows any sign of noticing. After they come to the conclusion that they like each other well enough to be married, the young man sends a friend to talk with her family, but more particularly to talk with her brother, as he usually assumes more control and authority over the girl than does her father or mother. If it seems all right and the girl is satisfied, they begin to bargain as to how much the young man ought to pay or give; that has been spoken of as buying a wife. A young woman often makes the boast that her husband has paid a large price, a considerable number of ponies, to get her. She would con-

sider it a disgrace to be given over to her lover for a small consideration.

When a young Indian man and woman marry in the Indian way, as a rule it is because they want to be together. I believe most of the tribes of the plains have polygamy; in some tribes it does not exist. Usually the man who marries the eldest daughter in a family has a prior claim on the other daughters, from which it happens in some cases that a man has two or three wives, all sisters. The theory is that mothers thus closely related will take a greater interest in all the children of the same family. At any rate, if a man has more than one wife, two of them are likely to be sisters.

There is no formal method of divorce; but either party is at liberty to separate from the other. When the woman leaves she takes her children with her, and this custom applies to all the tribes that I know. When with the Hopi Pueblos of Arizona who lead a sedentary life, I had opportunity to witness their marriage ceremony which took about two weeks altogether. Outside of the regular marriage ceremony, as you might call it, all the various societies connected with the families of the two contracting parties took part. On this occasion nine societies participated, and the dances and other ceremonies occupied from ten days to two weeks. But with the tribes of the plains there is no formal announcement. The news spreads abroad rapidly, and it is well known when a man and woman are married, and equally well known when they separate. On an average an Indian man or woman of fifty years of age has been married about three times; that is to say, has been married and separated three times. That is a fair average. Of course some couples live together all their lives. The grandfather and grandmother of the family with which I made my home among the Kiowa had never separated.



The everyday work of the Indian woman is looking after the children, cooking, and making clothes. They have some work specialties, one of which is the art of cutting and fitting the tipi cover. This and other specialties are not part of the ordinary woman's knowledge but belong to work societies, for the women have their labor unions just as our tradesmen have. The women nurses in the Kiowa tribe, who look after the mother at the time of the birth of a child, belong to a society called the "Star Girl" or Pleiades society, taking their name and medical power from the Pleiads, who are believed to have been originally seven sisters of the tribe. If it is the ambition of a young woman to learn all that a woman should know, she joins the women's labor unions and work societies. If, for instance, she wants to learn how to cut out a tipi, which is an especially difficult operation, on the payment of a certain number of blankets the head woman of the tipi society agrees to teach her. She tells the young woman the names of the different parts and how to arrange the skins so that when cut out they shall make the tipi pattern. I have watched the building of a tipi from start to finish and think I am the only white man in the country who knows how to cut one out. It is not such a simple matter as one might think. The tipi, as you know, is of a general conical shape, but if you look at it closely you will see that it has not the same slope on all sides; there is one slope from top to back and a longer slope from top to front which gives it greater solidity when set up. For the ordinary tipi from twenty to twenty-two poles are required. They used to count one buffalo hide to a pole, so that it took twenty hides for a tipi of the usual size.

Another part of woman's work is the dressing of these hides. This is a work of several days. After killing the animal, which must be done at the proper season to insure the best results, the skin is removed and scraped on both

sides to remove the flesh and hair. It is then treated with a mixture of cooked lime, grease and soap root (yucca), pounded up together and spread over the surface of the skin to render it soft and pliable. This application is repeated several times, together with a great deal of scraping, stretching and soaking in water, before the work is done, the whole process taking about a week.

Having prepared the skins, the woman of the household gets a professional expert to fit and cut them out for the tipi. The woman who does this work is supposed to be of good disposition, because if any other kind of a woman builds the tipi, things will never go right inside. She spreads the skins out on the ground in order that they may be arranged to fit properly, one particular skin being chosen to go at the top of the tipi. When she has them all spread out in an approximate circle, she marks with some red paint on the end of a stick the lines along which the women under her supervision are to cut out the pattern. When the cutting is done she fits these pieces together and the women sew them into one piece to cover the poles as they are set up. The tipi is painted, by the men, to represent some vision of the owner or to depict some war scene. Everything relating to it is woman's work, including the interior furnishings. I have here some specimens of Indian women's work, beaded pouches, moccasins, dolls, and buckskin sewing.

The Pueblo tribes and the eastern tribes in the timber country make pottery. I have given particular attention to the process and find it to be essentially the same east and west. Much depends upon the proper selection of the clay, the mixing of the two different kinds and the burning. All of this work is done by women. Woman is the great industrial factor in Indian life.

I have now described many of the things that concern the life of the Indian woman. On two occasions I was

present at the death and burial of a woman in our tribe. In the case of one, immediately after death her two sisters took charge of the body and arrayed it in her best buckskin dress with all her personal adornments. Then some of the friends carried the body out to a cave in the hills, while others of the same camp took out her household belongings, dishes and such things, and they all went out together. The husband went on his pony. It was a simple matter to lower the body down into the cave and cover the opening with logs and large stones. Then the dishes and other property were destroyed beside the grave by breaking them to pieces with an ax. After the funeral the relatives, more particularly the women, show their grief by cutting off their hair and gashing their faces, arms and legs repeatedly with butcher knives, while waiting in solitary places night and morning on the hills for perhaps a month. I have even known a woman to cut off her finger on the death of a child. In our family they destroyed the property and cut off their hair, but I was able to persuade them not to gash themselves.

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#### SYSTEMATIC NEBRASKA ETHNOLOGIC INVESTIGATION

I have been asked to say a few words this evening about a systematic Nebraska ethnological investigation. I do not know what your society is now doing along that line, but having had a little experience in the matter, I shall make a few suggestions as to method.

In the first place, I should try to get legislative authority, and then try to interest as many people of the state of Nebraska as possible in this work. Ethnology means the science which treats of the division of mankind into races, their origin, distribution and relations, and the peculiarities which characterize them—that is, the study of tribes and



racés. It includes archaeology, anthropometry and psychology; and besides our Indian tribes it includes our white and colored population. A systematic ethnological investigation should include and cover all these things. Having authority to do something, the first obvious step would be to have your state surveyor prepare a large map of Nebraska with all the ranges, townships, and everything else necessary for a survey sheet properly outlined, also indicating county lines, towns, and so on. Then go to the state school superintendent, explain the nature of the work to him and try to interest him, and get him to send out to the teachers of every district school in the state a circular letter, asking him to aid in the work by calling the attention of the pupils to what is proposed. This is something I have had occasion to do in our bureau, in an investigation of a similar character some years ago for the south Atlantic states. Draw up a circular letter covering the principal points of ethnological investigation. In this case it would relate to Indian tribes; but the circular letter should call for location of presumed Indian sites, archaeologic sites, battle sites, camp sites and what might be called sites of supplies, as paint quarries, flint deposits, etc.

The letter should call for names of streams and other places within the territory, of Indian origin or having an Indian connection. Have a paragraph also calling for names and addresses of any persons of Indian blood or any old settlers or frontiersmen living in the neighborhood. These circulars should be printed, two or three thousand of them, and mailed to those whose opportunity or business might give them knowledge of these things in their several localities. For instance, physicians who travel about and know nearly every family in certain country districts, postmasters, and ministers, are generally interested in such things. I should try to have one circular sent, not only to every school teacher, but to every country minister through-

out the whole state. I speak now of districts outside of large cities.

Then, having sent out these circulars, sit down and wait a while for results. You will probably find that a large per cent of the circulars will not come back, and that a great deal of the information received will not be to the point. There are many ideas in connection with places, names and so on that have no valid foundation, and you will find a good many such theories set forth in the answers. Aside from all this, however, you will acquire a very large fund of information that you could not have obtained readily in any other way, and it will cover every nook and corner of the state.

As a rule, besides the men who have given attention to such things, you can usually count upon a great deal of efficient field service from young university students. They like to see that their own county is properly represented, and they have a sufficient amount of training in that direction to go at it in the right way, and many of them will post up for the occasion. You can get the pioneers and pioneer associations; you can get associations of doctors and ministers and others; and there is no reason why the lawyers should not take part in the work.

Then, when these results begin coming in, send out your field force. A very essential thing to remember is that a large part of this ethnologic work is really Indian work. Go to the Indians and ask them for information; and hire an Indian to go around with you. Nebraska is particularly fortunate in still having representatives of each one of the native tribes, so that you do not have to begin, as you would if you were in an older state, by hunting up books and documents for information. And you have the younger generation of Indians, who have been educated as interpreters, whom you can get. In the northeast you have the Omaha tribe, and they have a particularly large

proportion of intelligent old men and intelligent young and middle aged who can give information. On your northern border you still have the great tribe of the Sioux, who claimed to the South Platte. Down in Oklahoma are the Pawnee, who held the central region with the Kiowa and Cheyenne who ranged over the same region, and the Oto, who held the southeastern part of the state; and back in Colorado are the Ute, who used to come down from their mountains and raid them all.

Mr. Gilder told you today of remarkable finds he had made along the Missouri river and in some cases gave his opinion as to the tribe that originated those things. It is hardly necessary to ascribe them to any of the tribes we know to-day, because before the historical period that region was occupied by more than one tribe that has now passed out of remembrance.

You can get from the Omaha anything that is within the memory of their tribe. It is not a difficult matter to go down to the Pawnee and others in Oklahoma and find out all that they can tell of the central region, or to get one or two of them up into Nebraska. They are all able to tell their own story.

You are also particularly fortunate that Nebraska is still a pioneer state, and you can get direct information from the first settlers. They are still here to tell their story, and you should secure this now, before it is too late.

You should make it a point to get the real Indian name of all rivers and hills and places. Get them correctly; get the name from the Indian himself (he is the best authority), and not the modern name manufactured as a translation by some white man. Get the real Indian name in scientific, phonetic spelling, and get the definite translation. It is well to remember that the Indian tribes in this central plain originally had no fixed boundaries, and often the same territory was covered or claimed by two or



more tribes. Consequently in getting these names from all of the tribes that ranged over the same country there may be some duplication. That does not matter so much, because it will be found that the names for the same place, in the various languages, have usually the same translation and are all indicated by the same signs in the sign language. For the Omaha territory get the Omaha names first. For the section of country claimed by the Pawnee put the Pawnee names first. Along with names of rivers, streams, hills, village sites and other places, you will get the names of plants, gods and notable heroes; and before you are done with it you will have a good deal of Indian mythology and Indian botany and many other things that you were not expecting when you started out. In that way cover the whole state from the Indian to the pioneer, with battle grounds and camp sites, posts and trails. Locate all these things by definite range, township and quarter section, and on one or the other side of a river. Anything that concerns Nebraska history you should follow out.

Some years ago in this way I made an archaeologic survey of the old Cherokee country in the southern Alleghanies. I located about one thousand sites of Indian archaeologic interest, village sites, mounds, quarries and stone graves. Each class was indicated on the map by means of a special symbol, and every site was numbered, with a separate series of numbers for each county. Corresponding to each number there was a manuscript note descriptive of the site or ancient remains, with a statement that it was so many miles in a certain direction from the nearest postoffice and on a certain side of the creek. That is an important point which is often neglected in mapping out these things. A man may tell you that a certain site is twenty-five miles north of Omaha, but you are not sure then even what state it is in; and if you know that it is within the state, you are not certain what county it is in.

Get these things down exactly by state, county and quarter section, distance in certain direction from the nearest post-office, and on which side of the stream, if any. In order to follow up the investigation get the name and postoffice address of the man who owns the site, so that you can correspond with him or send somebody there to talk with him. In that way you can map out your ethnologic and archaeologic nomenclature and pioneer landmarks for the whole state. You will find in many cases that the emigrant trails and later railroad lines have followed the original Indian trails. You will also find that the trails lead to the village and battle sites. Get all the data relating to these things.

Here again it is important that you call in the aid of the state to save archaeologic sites from the vandalism of ignorant people in order to preserve everything that is of sufficient importance for the state museum deposit. Especially if it forms part of a chain of evidence, try to secure it from interference until the proper students come to examine it. Photograph every stage of the excavation, then take out what you find and put it into your museum.

I believe I have suggested most of the things in connection with the archaeologic and Indian ethnologic survey of your state; but there is something beyond that which is growing rapidly in importance in this country. It has already been once or twice emphasized in these meetings that we are a new nation, a conglomerate, especially in these western states, from older nations. One of these days our children and their children will want to know concerning their forefathers, and what are the constituent racial elements that have combined to make up our present citizenship. It is still possible to fill in the record, especially here in Nebraska and Kansas and these younger western states. You can form some sort of impression of the line of general census work that would be required to make up

such an ethnologic map for the state. Find out where your immigrants have come from and where they have settled—your Germans, Irish, Swedes, Danes, etc., and your native Americans by states, and tabulate the result and put it upon a map. Then you will not only know who were your aboriginal predecessors, but who were your immediate ancestors in this country, and you will have put upon map record everything possible of past, present or future ethnologic interest to the people of Nebraska.



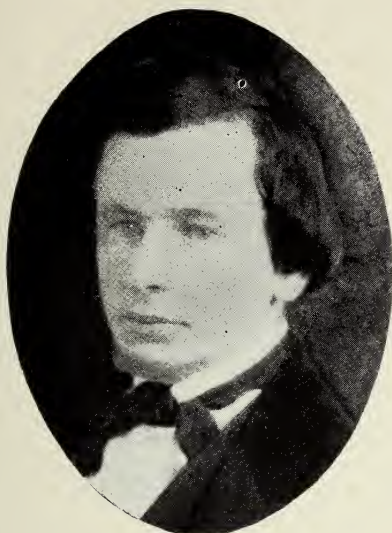
# A TRAGEDY OF THE OREGON TRAIL

BY GEORGE W. HANSEN

[Paper read at the annual meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society, January, 1912.]

Upon a beautiful swell of the prairie between the forks of Whisky Run, five miles north and one mile west of Fairbury, Jefferson county, Nebraska, and close to the "old legitimate trail of the Oregon emigrants" a red sandstone slab, twenty inches in height, of equal width, and six inches thick, marks a lone grave. An inscription cut in this primitive headstone reads: "Geo. Winslow, Newton, Ms. AE. 25." On a footstone are the figures "1849". A deep furrow marks the course of the oldest white man's highway in Nebraska through this still virgin meadow which overlooks the charming wooded valley of the Little Blue.

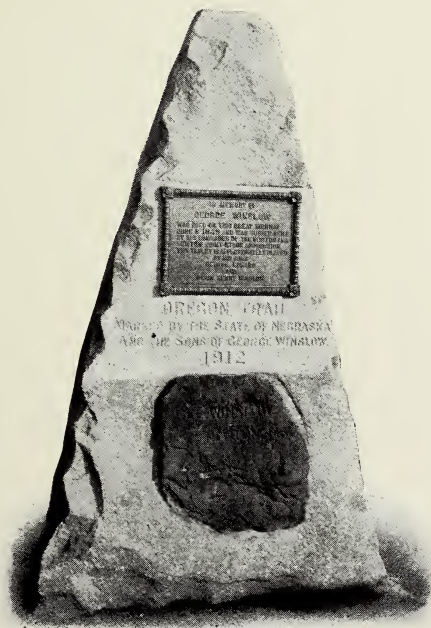
The Oregon Trail had become well known some four or five years prior to 1849, when the rush to the California gold fields set in. A letter written by William Sublette and others, in 1830, and published with President Jackson's message, January 25, 1831, reads, in part, substantially as follows: On the 10th of April last (1830) we set out from St. Louis with eighty-one men, all mounted on mules, ten wagons, each drawn by five mules, and two light carts, each drawn by one mule. Our route was nearly due west to the western limits of the state of Missouri, and thence along the Santa Fe trail about forty miles, from which the course was some degrees north of west, across the waters of the Kansas and up the Great Platte river to the Rocky mountains, and to the head of Wind river where it issues



GEORGE WINSLOW  
1824-1849



ORIGINAL MARKER AT  
WINSLOW GRAVE



PRESENT MONUMENT AT WINSLOW GRAVE  
Unveiled October 29, 1912





from the mountains. This took us until July 16, and was as far as we wished the wagons to go, as the furs to be brought in were to be collected at this place. On the fourth of August, the wagons being loaded with furs, we set out on the return to St. Louis. Our route back was over the same ground, nearly, as going out, and we arrived at St. Louis on the 10th of October. The usual progress was fifteen to twenty-five miles per day, the country being almost all open, level, and prairie. The chief obstructions were ravines and creeks, the banks of which required cutting down. "This is the first time that wagons ever went to the Rocky mountains . . . ."

To William Sublette, then, belongs the honor of making the first wagon track over this historic road to the Rocky mountains.<sup>1</sup> On the first of May, 1832, Captain Bonneville, with one hundred and ten men, "some of whom were

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<sup>1</sup> The letter, a part of which is here restated, is a report to the secretary of the treasury signed by Jedediah S. Smith, David E. Jackson, and William L. Sublette, in the order named. Smith and Jackson, however, remained in the hunting grounds during the winter of 1829 while Sublette returned to St. Louis for an outfit for their new rendezvous in Pierre's Hole. They were partners and all celebrated traders and trappers in the Rocky mountain region. Their report is published as document 39, Senate Executive Documents, 2d session 21st congress, pp. 21-23, and in the Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, December, 1903, page 395. Their statement that the wagons of this expedition were the first that ever went to the Rocky mountains is erroneous. There were three wagons in William Bicknell's expedition of 1822, which passed up the Arkansas river to the mountains and thence south to Santa Fe. Numerous wagon trains passed over the trail to Santa Fe—which is situated at the southern extremity of the Rocky mountain range by that name—between 1822 and 1830. One of these trains, in 1824, contained twenty-five wagons. So far as is known, Smith, Jackson and Sublette's wagons were the first to reach the Rocky mountains over the route which came to be known as the Oregon trail about fifteen years later; but William H. Ashley took a mounted cannon to and beyond the mountains, presumably over this route, in 1826. This is regarded as the first vehicle on wheels to cross the plains to the mountains north of the Santa Fe Trail, because there is no proof or knowledge to the contrary.

The statement in the report as to the place where the wagons were taken is hopelessly confused. "The head of Wind River, . . . as far as

experienced hunters and trappers," and a train of twenty wagons left Fort Osage—about twenty-two miles below the mouth of the Kansas river—arrived at the crossing of the Kansas on the 12th, reached Grand Island, about twenty-five miles below its head, on the 2d of June, and Green river on the 27th of July.<sup>2</sup> The same year came William Sublette, a partner in the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, in command of a party of sixty men carrying merchandise to the annual rendezvous of the company in the Wind river valley. At Independence, Missouri, he took under his care a party of New Englanders, fitted out and commanded by

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we wished the wagons to go," is a hundred miles north of "the Southern Pass, where the wagons stopped . . ."

Chittenden (*History of the American Fur Trade*, v. 1, p. 292, note) forces a guess that the authors of the report mistook the Popo Agie, whose headwaters are only fifteen miles from the South Pass, for the Wind river. But the head of the Popo Agie is about forty miles from the nearest point of the Wind river—too far, it would seem, to be mistaken for the main stream with which all three of the partners must have been familiar, since they had followed it to, or crossed it near its head, the year before, on their way to Jackson's Hole and Pierre's Hole.

Only two years later than the date of the report Captain Bonneville shows that the Popo Agie and the Wind river were distinctively known. (*The adventures of Captain Bonneville*, pp. 235, 237.) Still, if Smith, Jackson and Sublette's statement is to be regarded at all it must be assumed that they called Wind river the Popo Agie. Irving—in his *Captain Bonneville*—appropriately calls the Popo Agie the head of the Big Horn which is a direct continuation of it; but now the name Big Horn is applied to the river beyond the junction of the Wind and the Popo Agie, which occurs in Fremont county, Wyoming.

Coutant's *History of Wyoming* (v. 1, p. 132) says that the rendezvous was at the mouth of the Popo Agie—which is fifty miles northwest of South Pass—and that the wagons were taken to the Wind river valley, that is to the rendezvous itself, which seems the most likely theory, though, unfortunately, no authority is given for it.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> *The Adventures of Captain Bonneville* (Lippincott, 1871) pp. 39, 44, 51, 79. Bonneville was granted leave of absence by the war department to explore "the territory belonging to the United States between our frontier and the Pacific." (*Ibid.*, p. 502.) Pierre's Hole, the rendezvous of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company, was his immediate objective. (*Ibid.*, p. 41) The Columbia river region did not then belong to the United States.—ED.

Nathaniel J. Wyeth, whose name was given to a small creek now called Rock creek, in Jefferson county, Nebraska.<sup>3</sup>

In the year 1842, on the evening of the 22d day of June, John C. Frémont, his guide, Kit Carson, and ordinary employees—in all twenty-seven or twenty-eight,<sup>4</sup> including the son of Senator Benton—made their bivouac at the same cold spring, by the side of which, seven years later, George Winslow died. The Fremont party took their mid-day meal at Wyeth's creek, a few miles east of the present town of Fairbury, and "John C. Frémont," "Christopher Carson," and "1842", are carved on a rocky face of its bank.

Frémont had no difficulty in following this path, for, as he says, "about three weeks in advance of us was Doctor Elijah White with a party of sixteen or seventeen families, one hundred and twenty-seven people in all, in heavy wagons on their way to Oregon." This caravan was the earliest organized home-seeking overland emigration to Oregon.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Authorities generally agree that the number in Sublette's party was sixty-two. (Wyeth's Oregon, p. 47; History of the Northwest Coast, v. 2, p. 561.) John Ball says in his journal of the expedition that it followed the Big Blue and crossed over from its source to the Platte, and his estimate of distances agrees with this statement; but other circumstances indicate, though not conclusively, that he miscalled the Little Blue the Big Blue.—ED.

<sup>4</sup> The uncertainty arises from the fact that Frémont gives the number of his ordinary employees as twenty-one while his list of them contains twenty-two names. Randolph Benton was a lad of twelve years.—ED.

<sup>5</sup> The author has a standard authority—F. G. Young, Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, December, 1900, page 350—for his statement of the total number of the colony; but estimates vary greatly. The total number is commonly put at one hundred and twenty. (History of the Pacific Northwest, p. 175; Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society, December, 1905, p. 386.) Eells in his "Marcus Whitman" (p. 125) says the number was "about a hundred and ten." In "Ten Years in Oregon" (p. 144), virtually Doctor White's autobiography, it is said that "additions were made to the party till it amounted to one hundred and twelve persons." Medorem (also variously spelled in the books Medorum, Medoram, etc.) Crawford, a member and historian of the expedition, gives the number as one hundred and five, and Gray (History of Oregon, p. 212) says that there were forty-two families and one hundred and eleven persons. The



In June, 1844, Doctor Marcus Whitman, pursuant to a request of the secretary of war, drafted a bill providing for the establishment of posts along the road to Oregon for the protection of emigrants. The first section of this bill provided that these posts should be established beginning at the present most usual crossing of the Kansas river, thence ascending the Platte on the southern boundary thereof. In his brief, Doctor Whitman suggested the crossing of the Blue, the Little Blue, and the junction of the road with the Platte as sites for such posts. He says: "I have, since our last interview, been instrumental in piloting across the route described in the accompanying bill, and which is the only eligible wagon road, no less than two hundred families, consisting of one thousand persons of both sexes, with their wagons, amounting in all to more than one hundred and twenty with six hundred and ninety-four oxen and seven hundred and seventy-three loose cattle. As pioneers, these people have established a durable road from Missouri to Oregon, which will serve to mark permanently the route for larger numbers each succeeding year."<sup>6</sup>

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highest number of any authority is one hundred and sixty. See *History of Oregon* (Bancroft), v. 1, p. 256, footnote. It is there said that there were one hundred and twelve in the original organization which was increased on the road to one hundred and twenty-five.—ED.

<sup>6</sup> The number of people and animals in this great expedition cannot be given accurately since they vary in the best accounts of it; but those here given are approximately correct. Dr. Whitman's statement that he piloted the expedition is misleading. Though, by common consent, his services as guide were of great value, yet he did not join the colony until the Platte river was reached, and he left it at Fort Hall to go in advance to the Columbia river—over the least known and probably most difficult part of the road. In "A Day with the Cow Column in 1843" (*Quarterly Oregon Historical Society*, page 381), Jesse Applegate, a member of the colony, and afterwards very prominent in Oregon, said: "From the time he joined us on the Platte until he left us at Fort Hall, his great experience and indomitable energy were of priceless value to the migrating column." In his "Marcus Whitman" (page 222) Eells, a strong partisan of Whitman's, explains why he left the expedition at Fort Hall. Doctor Whitman's bill provided for establishing "a chain of agricultural posts or farming stations",

During the summers of 1844 and 1845 eight hundred wagons, with four thousand people, traveled over the Trail from Independence to the Columbia. In June, 1846, over three thousand people, with five hundred wagons, were upon the trail. In 1847 the high water-mark in the Oregon migration of the first decade was reached, five thousand people with eight hundred wagons making the journey. The California gold fever became epidemic in 1849 and 1850, and in those years vast numbers of emigrants passed Winslow's grave.<sup>7</sup>

Following the clue of the headstone, last summer I met George Winslow's sons, George E., of Waltham, Mass.,

and, as he describes their purpose, they would have been truly pioneer agricultural experiment stations, with military equipment also.—ED.

<sup>7</sup> Many estimates of the amount of travel over the Trail have been published—some careful, some careless and none, possibly, quite accurate. Horace Greeley, who went to California by the overland route in 1859, estimates that thirty thousand people went over the road that year; and it appears that a third of them were bound for Oregon. (Bancroft's *History of Oregon*, v. 2, p. 465, note.) The Oregon emigration was as high as ten thousand in 1862 also. (*Ibid.*, p. 493; *History of Wyoming*, Coutant, p. 379.) For estimates of emigration to Oregon, 1842-1852, by F. G. Young, see *Quarterly Oregon Historical Society*, December, 1900, p. 370. For estimates of emigration for 1844, 1845 and 1846, see Bancroft's *History of Oregon*, v. 1, pp. 446-572. The total overland emigration to the Pacific Coast in 1846 was 2,500. Bancroft (*Ibid.*, p. 108) and *The History of the Pacific Northwest* (p. 209) say that the emigration of 1845 was three thousand, doubling the population, and greater than any that had preceded it.

A conservative estimate of the number of emigrants passing over the South Pass in 1849 puts it at 25,000, and in 1850, 40,000. (*History of California—Bancroft—*, v. 6, p. 159; v. 7, p. 696.) Major Osborne Cross, who went to Oregon in 1849 with the Mounted Rifles regiment, estimated the total number of overland emigrants to California that year at thirty-five thousand, a considerable part of whom took the Santa Fe route. He remarked that few of those on the upper route went to Oregon. (*Senate Executive Documents*, 1850-51, v. 1, doc. 1, p. 149.) F. G. Young estimated the number going to Oregon at only four hundred. (*Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, December, 1900, p. 370.) According to the same authority—*ibid.*, p. 354—"after 1850 the Council Bluffs route had the largest transcontinental travel." The number going by the Council Bluffs route in 1849 and in 1850 and by the minor routes between that place and the eastern terminus of the trail would reduce the number passing up the Little Blue in the two years far below the total of 65,000 overland passengers.—ED.

and Henry O., at the home of the latter in Meriden, Conn. They were intensely interested in the incident of their father's death and in the protection of his grave. Henry Winslow will himself fashion a bronze tablet for the marker to be erected by the state of Nebraska. I learned from them that George Gould, the last survivor of the party, lives at Lake City, Minn. I now present to this society a daguerreotype portrait of him, taken in 1849, and a recent photograph; also his diary covering the entire journey.

From the Winslow memorial published in 1877, a copy of which I found in the Winslow home, and also in the New York city public library, we learn that George Winslow was descended from Kenelm Winslow of Droitwich, England, whose two sons, Edward and Kenelm, emigrated to Leyden, Holland, and joined the Pilgrim church there in 1617. Edward came to America with the first company of emigrants in the Mayflower and was one of the committee of four who wrote the compact or magna charta, which was subscribed to by all before landing. He became governor of Plymouth colony in 1833. His brother Kenelm came to America in the Mayflower with the long-hindered remainder of the Pilgrim church on a later voyage. His son, Kenelm Winslow, was born at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1635, and became the owner of large tracts of land. He bought a thousand acres at Mansfield, Connecticut for one hundred and fifty dollars. He was fined ten shillings for riding a journey on the Lord's day, although he pleaded necessity and that it was not want of respect for religion, for on three occasions he went sixty miles that his children might not remain unbaptized.

His son Josiah, born 1669, established the business of cloth dressing at Freetown, Massachusetts. He was a captain in the Massachusetts militia. His son James, born 1712, continued his father's business, and was a colonel in the Second regiment, Massachusetts militia. His



son Shadrach, born 1750, graduated at Yale in 1771 and became an eminent physician. His diploma, dated September 11, 1771, in the possession of his grandson, is a relic of general interest, diplomas from Yale of that early date being very rare. At the outbreak of the revolutionary war, being a gentleman of independent fortune, he fitted out a warship, or privateer, and was commissioned to attack the enemy on the high seas. He was captured off the coast of Spain and confined in a dismal prison ship where he suffered much. His son Eleazer, born 1786, took up his abode in the Catskill mountains with a view to his health, hunting bears and wolves for which a bounty was then paid; and while there, at Ramapo, New York, on August 11, 1823, his son George Winslow was born. The family moved to Newton, Massachusetts, now a suburb of Boston, where George learned his father's trade—machinist and molder. In the same shop and at the same time David Staples and Brackett Lord, who afterward became his brothers-in-law, and Charles Gould, were learning this trade. In the organization of the Boston and Newton Joint Stock Association Mr. Lord was chosen captain and Mr. Staples one of the directors, the latter becoming the active man in the purchase of animals and supplies. Mr. Staples was later one of the organizers of the Fireman's Fund Insurance Company of San Francisco, and its first president. He was a delegate from California to the Republican national convention that nominated Abraham Lincoln for president.

George Winslow was married in 1845. His first son, George Edward, was born May 15th, 1846, and is now a manufacturer of electrical supplies in Waltham, Massachusetts. His second son, Henry O., was born May 16th, 1849, the day the father left the frontier town of Independence, Missouri, driving his half-broken mules and white-topped wagon through the mud, hub deep, over the Oregon trail, bound for California. Henry O. Winslow learned his

father's trade, as did his two sons George and Carlton, and each of these men are managers of factories at Meriden, Connecticut, manufacturing silverware, brass and bronze goods and employing from nine hundred to one thousand men.

The Boston and Newton Joint Stock Association consisted of twenty-five picked young men from Newton and the vicinity of Boston. The capital of the company was sufficient to pay the traveling expenses of the company to Independence, Missouri, and to purchase animals, wagons and supplies for the overland journey to California, each member paying three hundred dollars into the treasury. The incidents along the journey I obtain from Mr. Gould's excellent journal, from which I quote freely. They left Boston April 16, 1849, traveling by rail to Buffalo, taking the steamer *Baltic* for Sandusky, Ohio, and then by rail to Cincinnati, where they arrived April 20, at 9 o'clock p. m., making the journey in four and one-half days. Mr. Gould says they "found the city very regularly laid out and having a handsome appearance, but what appears very disgusting to eastern people is the filth and the hogs that roam the streets and seem to have perfect liberty throughout the city."

They left Cincinnati April 23, on the steamer *Griffin* Yeatman, for St. Louis, and arrived there April 27. A bargain was struck with the captain of the steamer *Bay State* to take them to Independence, Missouri, for eight dollars apiece. The boat was crowded, principally with passengers bound for California. They now saw specimens of western life on boats; a set of gamblers seated around a table well supplied with liquor kept up their games all night. Religious services were held on board on the Sabbath, Rev. Mr. Haines, of Boston, preaching the sermon. The usual exciting steamboat race was had, their boat leaving the steamer *Alton* in the rear, where, Mr. Gould remarks, "we think she will be obliged to stay."

On May 3d, they landed at Independence, Missouri, pitching their tents and beginning preparations for the overland journey. This letter which I hold in my hand, yellowed with years, was written by George Winslow to his wife, from Independence, Missouri, May 12, 1849. Mrs. George Winslow gave it to her grandson, Carlton H. Winslow, in whose name it is presented to the Nebraska State Historical Society, together with an excellent copy of a daguerreotype of George Winslow taken in 1849.

On May 16th, this company of intrepid men, rash with the courage of youth, set their determined faces toward the west and started out upon the long overland trail to California. By night they had crossed the "line" and were in the Indian country. They traveled up the Kansas river, delayed by frequent rains, mud hub deep, and broken wagon poles, reaching the lower ford of the Kansas on the 26th, having accomplished about fifty miles in ten days. The wagons were driven on flatboats and poled across by five Indians. The road now becoming dry, they made rapid progress until the 29th, when George Winslow was suddenly taken violently sick with the cholera. Two others in the party were suffering with symptoms of the disease. The company remained in camp three days, and the patients having so far recovered, it was decided to proceed. Winslow's brothers-in-law, David Staples and Brackett Lord, or his uncle Jesse Winslow, were with him every moment, giving him every care. As they journeyed on he continued to improve. On June 5th, they camped on the Big Blue, and on the 6th, late in the afternoon, they reached the place where the trail crosses the present Nebraska-Kansas line into Jefferson county, Nebraska. Mr. Gould writes: "The road over the high rolling prairie was hard and smooth as a plank floor. The prospect was beautiful. About a half hour before sunset a terrific thunder shower arose which baffles description, the lightning flashes



dazzling the eyes, and the thunder deafening the ears, and the rain falling in torrents. It was altogether the grandest scene I have ever witnessed. When the rain ceased to fall, the sun had set and darkness had closed in."

George Winslow's death was attributed to this exposure. The next morning he appeared as well as usual, but at three o'clock became worse, and the company encamped. He failed rapidly, and at 9 the next day, the 8th of June, 1849, painlessly and without a struggle, he sank away as though going to sleep. He was taken to the center of the corral, where funeral services, consisting of reading from the Scriptures by Mr. Burt of Freetown, and prayer by Mr. Sweetser of Boston, Massachusetts, was offered. The body was then carried to the grave by eight bearers, followed by the rest of the company. Tears rolled down the cheeks of those strong men as if they were but children when each deposited a green sprig in the grave.

For George Winslow the Trail ended here—upon this beautiful scene, in these green pastures. All the rest of his company traveled its tedious length across plains, mountains and deserts, and reached the fabled gardens and glittering sands of El Dorado, only to find them the ashes of their hopes. Peradventure the grave had been kind to Winslow, for it held him safe from the disillusion which befell the rest.

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#### WINSLOW'S LAST LETTER TO HIS WIFE

Letter No. 3. Direct your letters to Sutters Fort, California.

Independence May 12 1849.

My Dear Wife I have purposely delayed writing to you until now so that I might be enabled to inform you with some degree of certainty of our progress & prospects; after starting for this State we heard so many Stories that I could with no certainty make up my mind wether we

should succeed in getting farther than here & of course felt unwilling to mail too many letters as we neared this Town lest we might return *before* they did. I am happy to say that I heard from you to day Uncle Jesse & Brackett were gratified by their wives in the same maner. I am glad to hear that you are well. My health was never better than now.

You ask me to tell you what they say out here about the route well those who have travelled it say we need borrow no trouble about forage; that *Millions* of Buffaloes have feasted on the vast praries for ages and now they have considerably dimmished by reason of the hunters &c. it is absurd to suppose that a few thousand emigrants cannot cross. I have conversed with Col. Gilpin a Gentleman who lives near by upon the subject and who has crossed to the Pacific five times: and his testimony is as above we all feel very much encouraged and every body says there is not a Co in town better fitted out than ours: we have bought 40 mules & 6 horses and will have two more horses by monday: our mules average us \$52. each we have also 4 waggons and perhaps may buy another: one of our waggons left Camp to day for the plaines 10 miles from here there to recruit up before starting. we shall probably get underway next Tuesday or Wednesday: as to your 2d question vis. How I like to ride a mule. I would say that I have not ridden one enough to know and do not expect to at present as I have been appointed Teamster and had the good luck to draw the *best* waggon we have covered it to day in tall shape: the top has two thicknesses of covering so that it will be first rate in rainy weather or very warm weather also to sleep in nights. As to "camping" I never slept sounder in my life—I always find myself in the morning—or my *bed* rather, flat as a Pan Cake as the *darned* thing leaks just enough to land me on Terra Firma by morning—it saves the trouble of pressing out the wind so who cares; it is excellent to keep off dampness.

We *die* on Salt Pork, Hard & Soft Bread, Beans Rice Tea Hasty Pudding & Apple Sauce also smoked pork and Ham. Being out in the Air we relish these dainties very much. My money holds out *very* well after buying several articles in Boston and 'eating' myself on the road part of

the time I have about \$15. on hand out of \$25. which I had on leaving home. I have lost nothing except that Glazed Cup which was worth but little. Uncle Jesse Gould and Nichols are talking in our tent so I will defer writing more until morning.

Sunday morning May 13. This is a glorious morning, and having fed and curried my mules and Bathed myself and washed my clothes I can recommence writing to you Elisa I will number this Letter 3 as I have sent you 2 before, the 2d from Sanduskey. I wish you would adopt the same system, then we may know if we receive every letter. We arrived here Friday P. M. May 4. Pitched our tents cooked and eat our supper & went to *Grass*, slept first rate, commenced the next day to get ready to move on: it being considerable of a job & the season backward we shall not get *fairly* started before 15 or 16 the weather is now warm and the grass is growing finely. For two days we—or some mexicans that we engaged have been busily employed breaking 10 mules: it was laughable to see the brutes perform. To harness them the Mex's tied their fore legs together and throwed them down the fellows then got on them rung their ears (which like a niggers shin is the tenderest part) by that time they were docile enough to take the Harness. The animal in many respects resemble a sheep: they are very timid and when frightened will sometime's kick like thunder: They got 6 harnessed into a team when one of the leaders feeling a little *mulish* jumped right straight over the other one's back. & one fellow offered to bet the liquor that he could ride an unbroken one he had bought: the bet was taken—but he no sooner mounted the (fool) mule than he landed on his hands & feet in a very undignified manner: a roar of laughter from the spectators was his reward.

After they are broken they are of the two more gentle than the Horse I suppose by this time you have some idea of a Mule. we have formed a coalition with two other (small) companies (one of which Edward Jackson of Newton Con. belongs to) The other from Me. consisting of only 4 persons one of which is Col. Boafish whom we have selected for our military commander. He belonged to the New Eng. Regiment and fought under Gen. Scott



in Mexico. I think he is a first rate man for the office—by this union we have two Doctors and a man of military experience.

We found Samuel Nicholson here: his co. will start the fore part of the week. There has been some sickness here principally among the intemperate which is the case every where you know. Our Co. is composed mostly of men who believe that God has laid down Laws that must be obeyed if we would enjoy health—& obeying those laws we are all in the *possession* of good health.

I see by your letter that you have the blues a little in your anxiety for my welfare. I think we had better not indulge such feelings. I confess I set the example. I do not worry about my self—then why should you for me—I do not discover in your letter any anxiety on your own account—then let us for the future look on the bright side of the subject and indulge no more in useless anxiety—it effects nothing and is almost universally the Bug Bear of the Imagination.

The reports of the Gold regions here are as encouraging as they were at Ms. just imagine to your self seeing me return with from \$10,000 to \$100,000. I suppose by this time I may congratulate you upon possessing a Family circle without me: for you know we use to say it required three to make a circle and Edward always confirmed it by saying 'No' I wish you would keep a sort of memorandum of kindnesses received. I shall write to Br. David to day requesting him to make great exersion to send you money when needful, you will of course inform him when that time arrives. I do not wonder that Gen. Taylor was opposed to writing long letters when on the Field. I am new writing at a low Box and am compelled to stoop to conquer. I offer this as an appology for not writing more to you now: and writing so little to others I wish you would preserve my letters, as they may be useful for future reference. Although we shall leave probably before your next letter arrives I expect to get it as one of our Co. will not start till about the 23, but will overtake us as he will have no Baggage of importance: he is from Ohio. Lord & Uncle Jesse will write to day They are both up and dressed and go it like men at a days work Hough & Staples Have

just returned from buying horses they have brought two with them: they are very beautiful I should like to send one home to Father we pay about \$50. for them apiece: in Boston they would bring \$150. Respects to all

Yours truly

George Winslow.

LETTER FROM BRACKETT LORD DESCRIBING WINSLOW'S  
SICKNESS, DEATH AND BURIAL

Fort Kearny June 17' 1849.

My very beloved wife | It has thus far been a pleasure for me to write to you from the fact that I have had nothing to write that you would not with pleasure peruse but my dear wife the scene has changed and this letter will bear to you intellegence of the most unwelcome character — intellegence of the most painful for me to write and which will wring your hearts with anguish and sorrow — George is dead — — what more shall I write — — what can I write — — but unpleasant as the news may be you will be anxious to hear the particulars.

About the 27th of May he was taken with the diareaehea which lasted several days and which visibly wore upon him. He was taken the day we crossed Kansas river. He however partially recovered but on the following Tuesday he ate some pudding for dinner which hurt him and about three o'clock in the afternoon he was taken much worse vomiting & purging also cramping; here we stopped he continued to grow worse & became very sick. Doct Lake Uncle Jessee Mr. Staples & myself watched with him during the night, about three o'clock in the morning we thought him dying I told him of the fact spoke to him of home, asked him if he did not wish to send some word to Eliza and his Father & mother & others—he did not leave any—seemed very sick. Wednesday morning appeared a little better and continued to improve so during the day—we remained camped during the day and untill Friday morning continued to improve so much so that he wanted to start on and the road being smooth we concluded to go on giving him as comfortable a bed as possible in one of our large waggons and I took charge of the wagon &

drove it all the time that he rode—that he might receive all the attention that our circumstances would allow—Evening he continued about the same—Saturday we travelled part of the day Doctor thought him improving. Sunday we moved a short distance to water and camped remained till Monday 10 o'clock A. M. George appeared much improved—we started on our journey he stood the ride much better than on the previous day we felt quite encouraged all said that he was visibly improving. Tuesday we started at 6 o'clock A. M. George continued improving the day was pleasant till the afternoon & George continued in good spirits. At 5 o'clock P. M. there come up a most violent shower such an one you perhaps never saw, there is nothing on these plains to break the wind and it sweeps on most furiously the lightning is truly terrific & when accompanied with wind hail & rain as in this case it is truly sublime. To this storm I attribut G's death. I was however aware of its violence & guarded him as thougroughly as possible with our rubber blankets from all dampness that might come through our covered wagons George did not appear worse. Wednesday morning George remains about the same—travelled most of the day. 3 o'clock George appeared worse. I sent immediately for the Doctor who was behind. Camped as soon as we could get to water. George did not appear better. Uncle Jessee watched the first part of the night but George growing worse uncle Jessee called Staples & myself & we remained with him till he died. Thursday morning George was very sick & much wandering—did not know us only at intervals—seemed to fail very fast—continued to sink very fast—9 o'clock—George is *dead*—his body lays here in the tent but his spirit has fled—Our company feel deep'ly this solemn providence. I never attended so solemn funeral—here we were on these plains hundreds of miles from any civilized being—and to leave one of our number was most trying. The exercises at the funeral consisted in reading the scriptures and prayer: this closed the scene—we erected grave stones on which we inscribed "George Winslow Newton Mass aged 25—1849" my dear Clarissa you will sympathise deeply with Eliza in her affliction. What a pity that such a young family should be broken up. I hope



that it may never be thus with us. George remarked several times during his sickness that he had a ways had a poor opinion of human nature but that he had received during his sickness more sympathy and attention than he supposed a member could receive. I am sorry that I have no particular word from him to send to Eliza or his Father and Mother or you—he left none. It was not because he did not think of home but because he thought he might get better—then at the last attack he was too sick to say anything: he used to say to me frequently “Lord if you are taken sick you will think more of your folks at home than yourself. I dont care anything about myself but my wife and my children they are dependent on me.” I had every reason to know that he thought much of home and his folks though he said but little. I was with him most of the time during his sickness all the time days and most of the time nights. We did not leave him from the time he was taken sick till his death without a watch and here let me say that he seemed to sink away as though he was going to sleep and died without a struggle. We shall take care of all his things. It is most time for us to start and I must close this letter and leave it. I have not yet said anything to you and I cannot say much now but I can assure you in the first place that I am well and I hope that you are all well—dont let the children forget papa. we are getting along very well and determined if possible to go through. I hope that you will not give yourself much anxiety about us in regard to sickness. I think we have passed through the most of it all of our party are well. I must now close hoping that when I arrive in California I shall receive a letter from you. As to your getting along in my absence do as you think best.

Very affectionately yours,

B. Lord

## THE OREGON RECRUIT EXPEDITION

BY ALBERT WATKINS

The object of early travel from the Missouri river to the region beyond the Rocky mountains was, first, exploration, as in the example of the expeditions of Lewis and Clark, and Frémont; second, trapping and trading; third, the colonization of Oregon; fourth, the reaching of the California and intramontane gold mines; fifth, the transportation of soldiers and military supplies for the protection of these enterprises from hostile Indians. Prior to the period of transcontinental railroad building there were several rival experimental routes to the northerly part of those regions and, more particularly, to Oregon; but the Platte river route, known as the Oregon Trail, gained supremacy during the decade of 1830-1840, and held it until the opening of the Pacific roads north of the first (Union Pacific) line divided the traffic.<sup>1</sup> The military department of the federal government, including its engineers, had faith in the superiority of upper routes while the general traffic persistently preferred the Platte route. In this test native instinct and experiment seem to have been wiser than science unassisted by experimental knowledge.

On the 6th of February, 1855, congress appropriated thirty thousand dollars "for the construction of a military road from the Great Falls of the Missouri River, in the Territory of Nebraska, to intersect the military road now

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<sup>1</sup> For an account of the evolution of the Oregon Trail see *History of Fort Kearny, Collections Nebraska State Historical Society*, v. 16; *The Evolution of Nebraska*, Proceedings of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association, 1909-1910, p. 126 et. seq.

established leading from Walla Walla to Puget's Sound", but no action was taken upon this scant allowance. In subsequent appropriations the eastern terminus of the road was fixed at Fort Benton, which was forty miles below the great falls and practically the head of navigation, and also an important post of the American Fur Company. It was only in very high water that boats could run to a point a little below the great falls.

On the 3d of March, 1859, the federal congress appropriated one hundred thousand dollars "for the construction of a military road from Fort Benton to Walla Walla", and another hundred thousand was appropriated for the same purpose by the act of May 25, 1860.<sup>2</sup> Lieutenant John Mullan, of the Second artillery regiment, was detached to superintend the construction of the work.<sup>3</sup>

On the 31st of March, 1860, Pierre Choteau, Jr., of

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<sup>2</sup> United States Statutes at Large, v. 10, p. 603; 11, p. 434; 12, p. 19. Fort Walla Walla, situated contiguous to the city of the same name on the Walla Walla river, about thirty-five miles above its mouth, was established as a military post September 23, 1856. Whitman's mission, at Waiilatpu, five miles farther down the river, was established near the close of 1836. The original Fort Walla Walla, a post of the Northwest Fur Company (British), was established at the junction of the Walla Walla and Columbia rivers in 1818.

Fort Benton was established in 1846 by Alexander Culbertson, as a post of the American Fur Company. On the 17th of October, 1869, it was taken over for a military post of the United States. A town was laid out there in 1864 (Report of Secretary of the Interior, House Executive Documents 1864-5, v. 5, p. 415). Trade and steamboat traffic fell off from the time that it became a military establishment; but they revived again in 1882-83. The river trade was destroyed and the town crippled by the advent of the Great Northern railroad. (Forty years a Furtrader, v. 2, p. 258, note.)

<sup>3</sup> Lieutenant Mullan's regiment was already in Oregon on account of the Indian troubles. He received his instructions on the 15th of March, 1859, had organized his party and started from Fort Dalles on the 8th of June and began the work of construction on the 25th. (Senate Documents 1859-60, v. 2, doc. 2, p. 542; House Ex. Docs. 1859-60, v. 9, doc. 65, p. 108.) On the 19th of March the adjutant general of the army directed General W. S. Harney, then in command of the Oregon department, to provide Mullan's party with a military escort and supplies. (Ibid., p. 118.)



St. Louis, contracted with Thomas S. Jesup, quartermaster, to transport from St. Louis to Fort Benton "about three hundred enlisted men, officers, servants, and laundresses, with their military stores and supplies, and to be paid one hundred dollars for each officer, fifty dollars per man, laundress, and servant, and ten dollars per hundred pounds for stores and supplies, including the subsistence of the men during the trip".<sup>4</sup>

General order number 37, dated at the headquarters of the army, New York, March 31, 1860, directed the two departments of the recruiting service to organize, at Fort Columbus and Newport Barracks,<sup>5</sup> four companies of recruits—two at each post—of seventy-five men each, "for the troops serving in the department of Oregon"; the recruits to be detached to Jefferson Barracks, near St. Louis, April 20th next; to move from St. Louis, April 20th, by the Missouri river to Fort Benton; and thence to Fort Dalles by the route being passed over by Lieutenant Mullan of the Second artillery; arrangements for transportation beyond St. Louis to be made by the quartermaster-general; the four companies to be armed and equipped as infantry at Jefferson Barracks and supplies to be obtained at St. Louis. Brevet Lieutenant Colonel Robert C. Buchanan, Fourth infantry, was assigned to the command of the recruits, but was superseded by Major G. A. H. Blake, of the First dragoons. Colonel Joseph E. Johnston, acting inspector-general of the army, afterward a con-

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<sup>4</sup> House Executive Documents 1860-61, v. 8, doc. 47, p. 5. Lieutenant Mullan in a report of progress in the construction of the road, dated January 3, 1860, says (*ibid.*, doc. 44, p. 33) that Choteau had agreed upon a price of thirty dollars per head for carrying the three hundred recruits; but this must have been an error.

<sup>5</sup> Fort Columbus was situated on Governor's Island, New York, and Newport Barracks in Kentucky, on the Ohio river, nearly opposite Cincinnati.

federate general of our sectional war, was ordered to inspect the recruits prior to their departure.<sup>6</sup>

The official reports disclose the fortunes of the expedition up the Missouri river and also its exploration purpose. For many years after the introduction of steamboats to the Ohio and the Mississippi, the more rapid and changeable current, the ubiquitous sandbar, whose formations were more fickle even than political personal preference or public opinion, and the equally numerous and more damaging snags of the Missouri were the preclusive bugbear of steam navigation. The first steamboat to tempt this triplex obstruction and destruction was the *Independence* which started from St. Louis on the 15th of May, 1819, reached Franklin on the 28th, whence it proceeded as far as Chariton, about thirty miles beyond, before returning to St. Louis.<sup>7</sup>

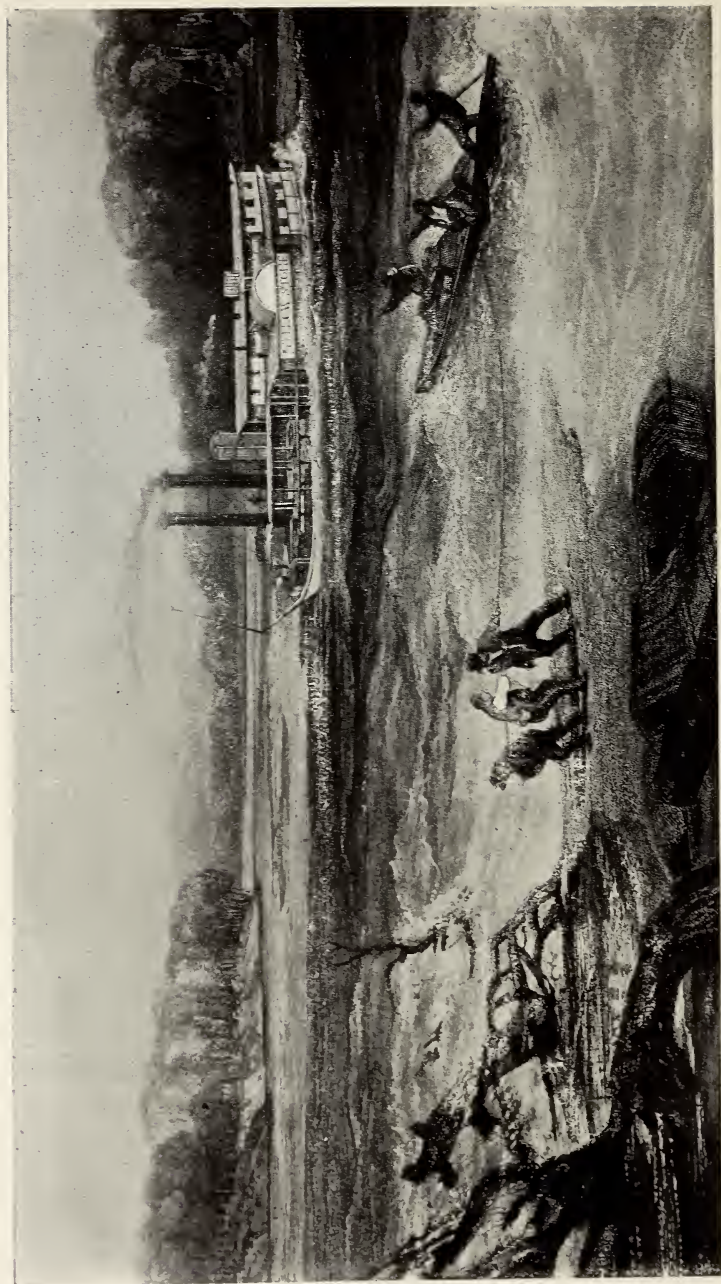
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<sup>6</sup> The minor officers were Captains John H. Lendrum, Third artillery, and Delancey Floyd Jones, Fourth infantry; First Lieutenants August V. Kautz, Fourth infantry, La Rhett L. Livingston, Third artillery, John C. Kelton, Sixth infantry; Second Lieutenant Edwin H. Stoughton, Sixth infantry—to report at Fort Columbus, April 15; Captain Thomas Hendrickson, Sixth infantry, and First Lieutenants John T. Mercer, First dragoons, Benjamin F. Smith, Sixth infantry, George W. Carr, Ninth infantry, to report at Newport Barracks, April 15. (*The Century*, April 7, 1860, p. 79.) Brevet Second Lieutenants M. D. Hardin, C. H. Carleton, and J. J. Upham, of the Third artillery, Fourth and Sixth infantry, respectively, were assigned to duty with the recruits. (*Ibid.*, April 14, 1860, p. 108.) Two detachments, two hundred and nineteen and one hundred and twenty strong, respectively, left Fort Columbus and Newport Barracks April 20. (*Ibid.*, April 28, 1860, p. 164.) Brevet Second Lieutenant H. C. Pearce, First dragoons, was assigned to the detachment of recruits for Oregon. (*Ibid.*, May 5, 1860, p. 189.) In the post returns of July, 1859, it appears that Lieutenant John S. Mason, of the Third artillery, was at Fort Columbus, New York, on general recruiting service. (House Executive Documents 1859-60, v. 9, doc. 65, p. 197.)

<sup>7</sup> Franklin was situated on the north bank of the river, in Howard county, Missouri, two hundred and five miles, by the river, above St. Louis. Within a year after this demonstration of the practicability of steamboat navigation on the lower Missouri, Franklin became a very important and thriving place, as the initial and outfitting point of the Santa Fe trail. It held this monopoly for six or seven years, when the overland initial terminal was pushed up the river about one hundred and eight







THE STEAMER YELLOWSTONE, ON APRIL 19, 1833.—From Portfolio of Maximilian Prince of Wied.

It was the public purpose that the both famous and infamous Yellowstone Expedition of the same year should demonstrate the practicability of steamboat navigation to the far upper Missouri; but of the four boats that entered the river only one, Major Long's *Western Engineer*, was able to get as far as the Council Bluff of Lewis and Clark; though the next year one of these failing boats, the *Expedition*, reached the same point with a full cargo. In 1831 five steamboats made trips throughout the season from St. Louis to the settlements along the Missouri, Glasgow, successor to Chariton, and Boonville being the principal upper terminal points. By 1836 from fifteen to twenty boats were regularly engaged in this traffic. As early as 1829 a packet boat ran regularly to Fort Leavenworth. In 1831 the *Yellowstone*, built by the American Fur Company for the upper river fur trade, went as far as the site of the subsequent Fort Pierre in South Dakota, but it accomplished the latter part of the voyage only by much lightening and through the pertinacity of Pierre Choteau, Jr., who conducted the enterprise. The next season this boat reached Fort Union, at the mouth of the Yellowstone river. This was accounted a great triumph of transportation. Until 1845 an annual voyage of the *Yellowstone* to the same point was the limit of steamboat traffic to the high-up Missouri. In 1834 a boat had ventured as far as the mouth of Poplar river, about a hundred miles beyond the Yellowstone; in 1853, another—the *El Paso*—went a hundred and twenty-five miles farther—a little beyond the mouth of Milk river; and in 1859, the *Chippewa*, one of the trinity of our Oregon recruit expedition, went still farther, to a point about seventeen miles below Fort Benton, the acknowledged head of navigation. The Mormon immigration to the

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miles farther, to Independence, and Franklin rapidly declined. In 1832 the buildings were moved to a new location, two miles back from the river, which soon after carried away the original site.

Missouri river, beginning in 1846, and its subsequent settlement in Utah; the resulting traffic to Utah augmented by the transportation of vast quantities of military supplies to the army sent there in 1857 and 1858 to suppress the Mormon rebellion; the emigration to Oregon and California which reached a great volume in the latter half of the decade of 1840-50, and the establishment of a chain of military posts in the interior to protect this traffic from hostile Indians; the development of a considerable fur trade in the lower Rocky Mountain region; and the political organization and resultant rapid settlement of Kansas and Nebraska had created by 1860 a heavy business for regular lines of steamboats to Leavenworth, Atchison, St. Joseph, Brownville, Nebraska City, Omaha, and Sioux City. As far, then, as Sioux City our Oregon recruit expedition traversed familiar, and on to the Yellowstone not untried, waters. The experimental features of the journey were the extreme upper reaches of the possibly navigable Missouri and the testing of the relative practicability of the two routes to Oregon.

The official records of the war department tell us that, on the 3d of May, 1860, a detachment consisting of thirteen officers, two hundred and twenty-two enlisted men, under Major George A. H. Blake, of the First dragoons, left St. Louis for Oregon, via Forts Union and Benton and the wagon road commenced by Lieutenant John Mullan from Walla Walla to Fort Benton. "The detachment embarked on three steamers and the march was undertaken to test the feasibility of that route to Oregon." The march was successfully accomplished and the command kept in good health, except some fifteen cases of scurvy and other diseases. The sick soldiers were sent back from Fort Benton on the returning boats. The expedition arrived at Sioux City May 23, the water being very low; Fort Randall, May 27, where it met a temporary rise of water from rains,



which facilitated progress; Fort Pierre June 2, noon, water very low again; mouth of Milk river, June 22; Fort Union evening of June 15; Fort Benton July 2, where the boats remained until August 2.<sup>8</sup> The *Nebraska City News* of February 23, 1861, notes, in a steamboat itinerary of 1860, that the fleet passed that place on the 15th of May. The *Omaha Nebraskian* of May 19, 1860, noted the passage of the fleet in its characteristically breezy style:

“On the 16th inst. a fleet of Steamers, consisting of the Spread Eagle, Key West and Chippewa, touched at this port on their way to the head waters of the Missouri—distant over two thousand miles. Each boat was crowded to its utmost capacity, with United States troops whose destination is Oregon, and the Territory of Washington. They will ascend the Missouri as far as navigable by the steamers above mentioned, and from thence will be marched across the Mountains to the forts of their destination. It will be remembered that this is the same route that the *Nebraskian* recommended to Oregon emigrants some two years ago, and it is a source of some gratification to know that our suggestions are properly appreciated by the general government, and to believe that this is destined to be the traveled route to one, at least, of the Pacific States. The trial trip was made by two of the boats mentioned, last season, in taking up a party of Government explorers. They then ascended the Missouri higher than any attempt was ever before made to navigate it, but we understand this fleet expects to ascend one hundred and fifty miles nearer the source of this mightiest of streams. The distance from the head of navigation on the Missouri, to the head waters of the Columbia, is only about three hundred miles. If the Mississippi be the “Father of Waters” it is not too much to claim that the Missouri, is at least the mother, the grandfather, the grandmother, the great-grandfather, the great-grandmother, numberless uncles, aunts and cousins, besides not a few poor relations.”

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<sup>8</sup> Senate Executive Documents 1860-61, v. 7, doc. 1, p. 131—report of the adjutant general, S. Cooper.

Alfred J. Vaughan, agent of the Blackfeet Indians, in a report to the superintendent of Indian affairs, dated at the agency, tells the following concise story of the voyage:

“Blackfeet Farm, August 31, 1860.

“Sir: In compliance with the regulations of the department, I have the honor to respectfully submit the following as my annual report for 1860:

“The fleet of steamers for the Upper Missouri, viz: Spread Eagle, Captain Labarge, Chippewa, Captain Humphreys, and Key West, Captain Wright, all under the control of Mr. C. P. Choteau, of the firm of C. Chouteau, Jr., & Co., contractors of the government troop's stores and Indian annuities. The troops commanded by Major Blake left St. Louis on May 3. We arrived safe at Fort Randall after a tedious trip on account of the low stage of the river. At this point we met a rise, which enabled us to make the balance of the trip without any detention. We arrived at Fort Union on June 15, and, after discharging the Assinaboine annuities, went on our way rejoicing.

“In due time we made Milk river; the landing of the steamer El Paso was passed: the steamer Spread Eagle accompanied us some ten miles further and then returned on her homeward way, having been ten miles further up than any side-wheel boat was before.

“Our little fleet, now reduced to two, the Key West, commanded by Captain Labarge, in the van, boldly and fearlessly steered their way up what would seem to the uninitiated an interminable trip. At length the long expected goal is made, and on the evening of July 2 the two gallant crafts, amidst the booming of cannon and the acclamations of the people, were landed at Fort Benton with one single accident, and that was a man falling overboard, who unfortunately was drowned.

“Without wishing to be thought invidious when all do well, too much praise cannot be bestowed upon Captain Labarge and all the officers of the command for the untiring skill and energy displayed by them on this *remarkable trip*. Also to Mr. Andrew Dawson, partner, in charge of Fort Benton, for his forethought and sagacity in having wood hauled some sixteen miles below the fort, which enabled

the two gallant crafts to land where no steamer was moored before.”<sup>9</sup>

Periodical communications from the fleet published in *The Century* are full of interesting information. Following is a synopsis of one of these letters, dated “The Expedition,—near Sioux City, Ia., May 20, 1860,” which was published in the issue of June 16:

Left St. Louis May 31, have made nine hundred and fifty miles in seventeen days, average per day, fifty-six miles; on some days eighty miles; water the lowest “in the memory of the oldest inhabitant.” If we had only this boat—the Chippewa—“and the Key West, both stern-wheelers, drawing thirty-two inches, loaded as they now are, we would have averaged seventy-five miles a day.” The delays are all caused by waiting for the *Spread Eagle*, a side-wheeler, drawing four feet and intended to go only to Fort Union.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Messages and Documents 1860-61, p. 306.

<sup>10</sup> The statement by the correspondent of *The Century*, as early as May 20th, that the *Spread Eagle* was intended to go only to Fort Union seems questionable. An article in the *Missouri Democrat*, written by Mr. J. A. Hull and copied in the *Peoples Press* (Nebraska City) of July 19, 1860, says:

“The mountain fleet arrived at mouth of Milk river Friday June 22d, fifty days out from St. Louis, and as the river had commenced falling it was thought advisable to send the ‘flagship’ back. Accordingly we transferred the balance of our freight to the Chippewa and Key West. Mr. P. W. [C. P.] Choteau then proposed that the *Spread Eagle* should make a pleasure trip above the point where the El Paso landed several years since [1853]. And with the officers of the army, and most of the officers of the boats, we run about fifteen miles above El Paso point—the *Spread Eagle* has now been higher up the Missouri river than any other side wheeled boat, and Captain La Barge has the honor of being her commander. On our arrival at the point two guns were fired, a basket of champagne was drank by the officers and guests, and one bottle buried on the point. I suppose any one who goes after it can have it. The *Spread Eagle* could have very easily got higher up—indeed it was thought at one time she would reach Fort Benton, the river rose so rapidly, but Captain Choteau did not wish to risk so much merely for glory.”

In the same communication it is said that on the return trip the *Spread Eagle* arrived at Sioux City July 5, met the *Florence* at Florence



Have passed some very pretty towns, "especially Omaha City." The party consists of three hundred and forty recruits, "collected from all parts of the Union, and not very strictly selected either"; one hundred boatmen and fifty officers, "passengers, etc., gathered out of every nation under heaven."

The writer correctly predicts the drying up of river traffic by railroads—now at St. Joseph, next at Sioux City, then when the Northern Pacific reaches Fort Union that will be the starting point for steamboats.

Besides the soldiers there were about a dozen passengers on the three boats, including Colonel Vaughn, agent of the Blackfeet, Major Schoonover, agent for the tribes near Fort Union, several employees of the American Fur Company, and two New York artists—Hays and Terry—going to Fort Union, "to paint our great animals of the plains from life." The officers included Major Blake, Captains Lendrum and Jones, Lieutenants Cass, Livingston, Smith, Kautz, Carleton, Upham, Hardin and Stoughton, and Doctors Head and Cooper, all going to the Columbia river, and Captain Getty and a lieutenant for Fort Pierre. The "navy of the Missouri" was under "Commodore Choteau", with Captains Labarge, Humphreys and Wright.

The next letter, appearing in the issue of July 5, and dated June 2, at Fort Pierre, notes progress since May 20 of six hundred miles, an average of only fifty miles a day. All agreed that starting so early was a mistake. If they had waited at St. Louis until about May 15, or until a rise of water began to show itself, two weeks time on the river would have been saved. There were only twenty-six inches of water on the bars at the Sioux City bend, so that

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on the 6th, passed the Emilie at Brownville on the 7th, and met the Omaha just below.

*The Omaha Nebraskan*, of July 28, 1860, contains this notice: "The Chippewa from Fort Benton, touched at this point on her way down, on the 25th inst. We did not get her news."

it was necessary to unload the *Chippewa* and lighten the *Spread Eagle* to get them over, causing a delay of three days in making thirty miles. Just above this point the fleet met a rise of eighteen inches, and the next day as much more, the increase alone being sufficient to float the two smaller boats. Consequently, for the following three days seventy-five miles a day was made, and Fort Randall was reached while the voyagers were "highly elated with the prospect of a quick voyage through." At the fort "the full band of the Fourth artillery greeted our arrival . . . and cheered us as we again started towards the wilderness with the echoes of 'Home Sweet Home' and 'The Girl I Left Behind Me'". About thirty miles farther on, a terrific storm of rain and hail forced the boats to lie by under shelter of bluffs for a day and a half; but while the resulting rise lasted ninety miles a day was made. "We travel, of course, only by day, though the high water and almost total absence of snags would make night travel easy if the channel were better known."

Above Fort Randall it became difficult to obtain enough dry fuel for the boats. Between this post and Fort Pierre—two hundred and forty miles—"not a human being lives, except some white cedar log-cutters, and the reason of its desertion by Indians is evident in the almost total absence of game". Fort Pierre was nearly half way—1,450 miles—from St. Louis to Fort Benton.

The next letter—published in *The Century* July 26, 1860—was dated, "Missouri River, Fifty miles From Fort Marion, Nebraska, June 19, 1860."<sup>11</sup> From Fort

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<sup>11</sup> This point was probably at Marion's Bend, about ten miles above the mouth of Poplar river, now in Valley county, Montana. The *Spread Eagle*, the slowest boat of the three, and the *Chippewa* made the voyage in 1859 to a point "a few miles below Fort Benton" in ten days less time. The *Spread Eagle* went as far as Fort Union and there transferred her cargo of about one hundred and sixty tons to the *Chippewa* which completed the voyage. (Messages and Documents, 1859-60, pt. 1, p. 483.)

Pierre progress had been at the average rate of fifty-nine miles a day, "including long delays from being obliged to cut all our wood where it was often very scarce and from stopping to unload freight at the American Fur Company's Forts Clark and Berthold . . . The water has risen constantly and rapidly, so that it is higher now at Fort Union than ever before seen at the arrival of the arsenal of boats which have previously reached there only during its fall. And though the great river there divides, the Yellowstone, which had contributed half its volume, no longer helping us, yet the upper Missouri seems scarcely diminished in breadth or depth, the boats winding boldly along without fear of striking. The answer to the sounding-bell is almost invariably that forcible, if not exactly nautical phrase, 'no bottom'."

A letter dated "Mouth of Milk River, Nebraska, June 22, 1860", was published in the same issue of the magazine as the preceding. The *Spread Eagle* was to start back down the river from this point the next day. The expedition had already advanced two hundred and fifty miles above Fort Union, a comparatively high up point; but in that region of magnificent distances the superlative objective was still five hundred and thirty-two miles beyond. The correspondent was encouraged by progress already made to believe that "boats can easily be built which will make the trip from St. Louis to Benton, thirty-five hundred and fifty miles, in thirty days." Wood was scarce for about one hundred and fifty miles above and below Fort Pierre but increased in amount northward. Above the great bend (now in South Dakota) there were "large groves of that excellent wood, the red cedar, much of it now dead, and ready for fuel if there were inhabitants to cut it". Lieutenant Warren was in error in saying in his topographical report to congress that this valuable tree disappeared at the forty-sixth parallel, for it reappears again at the forty-



seventh and becomes more abundant above the bend, growing thirty feet high and near a foot in diameter, accompanied by the low carpet-like juniper. "Milk river is named from its whiteness, caused by a great quantity of alkaline mud it always contains, and which gives to the Missouri below most of its turbidity, in color like weak coffee and milk . . . Above the Musselshell it will be found quite clear . . . The artists left us last week having already painted some beautiful heads of animals." Our correspondent, whose name was concealed in the initial signature J. G. C., sketched views almost daily and also busily collected specimens of natural history.

A letter published in the issue of August 2 informs us that the expedition arrived at Fort Benton July 2, sixty days from St. Louis; and that boats of proper draught would have made the trip in thirty days. Assistant Surgeon S. F. Head, U. S. A., and Doctor Cooper of New York, were attached to the expedition. The issue of August 9 contained a letter dated "Camp near Fort Benton, July 3, 1860." The fleet advanced from Milk river at the average rate of sixty miles a day. Large groves of Oregon fir, excellent pitch pine, and red cedar began to appear a few miles above Milk river. They only bordered the river where tracts bare of grass protected them from fire. It was necessary to cordelle the boats up much of the rapids below Fort Benton, three hundred men hauling by the ropes "to help the steam." Lieutenant Mullan would not be able to get through—over his new road from Walla Walla—before the end of a month. He could get oxen enough for only twenty-five, instead of the needed forty wagons for transportation for the expedition.

On the first of August Lieutenant Mullan's expedition arrived at the fort, "the road of six hundred and thirty-three miles from Fort Walla Walla to Fort Benton being opened". On his arrival he turned over all his wagon

transportation to Major Blake; but he retained a force of about twenty-five men with which he returned over the road in advance of Major Blake's command, starting August 5—"having seen that the party to descend the Missouri were properly provided for their trip . . ." He had previously reported that he had at Fort Benton "a ninety-foot keel boat, which I shall use in sending my party down the Missouri".<sup>12</sup>

On November 1, 1860, in a communication to the assistant adjutant general, headquarters department of Oregon, Lieutenant Mullan sought to demonstrate that in future it would be more economical to use Fort Snelling as a rendezvous for troops destined for the easterly posts of the department of Oregon, the supplies, however, to be transported by steamboat to Fort Union and Fort Benton. In the course of his demonstration he states the experimental case of transportation of troops via the Missouri:

"As you are aware, during the summer of 1859 and 1860 the Missouri river was proved to be navigable to within 100 miles of the Rocky mountains, and during the present season a military detachment of 300 recruits, under Major Blake, ascended in steamers as high as Fort Benton, where, taking land transportation, they moved safely and in good season to Fort Walla Walla.

"This demonstrated that the Missouri river, together with the intervening land transit to the Columbia, could be used as a military line whenever the necessity for a movement existed, and provided the proper season for navigation be taken advantage of. But in future years, or until the condition of the interior shall guarantee an abundance of land transportation at the head of navigation on the Missouri, the element of uncertainty must ever enter into the movement of any body of troops to this coast via the Missouri and Columbia. During the last season it was practicable because we had land transportation at hand for the movement westward."

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<sup>12</sup> House Executive Documents 1860-61, v. 8, pp. 32, 53, 54.

This objection is probably overrated to accommodate a prepossession.

In a letter following Lieutenant Mullan's, Colonel Wright of the Ninth infantry concurs in his views, and he adds that the passage of a body of troops from Fort Snelling to Washington Territory would have an excellent effect upon the Indians on the route, checking a disposition to commit hostilities.<sup>13</sup>

"A report on Lieutenant Mullan's Wagon Road" . . . by Major E. Steen to Quartermaster-General Joseph E. Johnston, dated at Fort Walla Walla January 5, 1861, states the case for the overland road in a manner which discloses a somewhat bitter feeling between partisans of the rival routes:

"General: I take the liberty, and feel it my duty, to call your attention to the Fort Benton wagon road, as I believe, from experience in the service, and crossing the plains frequently for the last thirty years, that the cost of sending recruits or horses to this coast by that route will be ten times as much as by the route from Fort Leavenworth, *via* Forts Riley, Laramie, Hall, and Boisé, to this post; for by the boat to Benton each soldier will cost one hundred dollars, and each wagon the same; then to get mules or oxen for the wagons would be double the cost that it would be at Leavenworth.

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<sup>13</sup> Senate Documents 1860-61 (special session), v. 4, doc. 2, p. 3.

John B. Floyd, Secretary of War, said in his report: "I took active measures to have a road constructed from Fort Walla-Walla on the Oregon river, across the mountain ranges to Fort Benton, on the head of the Missouri river . . . After a prosperous march of less than sixty days from Fort Benton [600 miles] the command arrived in safety and good condition at Fort Walla-Walla . . . Although the movement was an experiment alone, it has demonstrated the important fact that this line of intercommunication can be made available for moving large bodies of men from the Atlantic to the Pacific . . . With comparatively a small sum of money spent upon the removal of obstructions from the Missouri river and some additional expenditure on the road, this line would constitute a most valuable improvement, second only, and hardly second for military purposes, to any of the projected lines of railroads to the Pacific." (Senate Documents, 2d Sess. 36th Cong., v. 2, p. 6.)



"Purchase your horses, wagons, and oxen or mules to transport your supplies at Leavenworth, and if the transportation is not needed here on its arrival, it can be sold at public auction for its full value in the States. By this means each soldier will hardly cost ten dollars, whereas by the Benton route each one would cost three hundred by the arrival here.

"One more suggestion. Could not the one hundred thousand dollars already appropriated, and not yet expended, be transferred to the old road I speak of? It is much the shortest and best route—and emigrants come through every season, arriving here by the end of September, their animals in very good condition.

"A post is to be established at Boisé in the spring, and there will always be troops at Fort Hall to protect emigration, and all that is needed are ferries at these posts, and very little work on the road.

"There will then be grass, water, and all that is requisite for a military or emigrant road.

"I do believe, if the one hundred thousand dollars is expended, and the Benton road finished, that not ten emigrants will travel it for twenty years to come.

"But suppose you make the road from St. Paul to Benton, then you must establish a line of posts through the Sioux and Blackfoot country, requiring at least 1,500 soldiers, at a cost of half a million annually, and there would be a war, at a cost of three or four millions more.

"In a conversation with Major Blake, of the army, who came by the Benton route with 300 recruits last summer, he spoke favorably of the route, and said he would apply to bring over horses from St. Paul, via Benton, to this department. Now, I am satisfied that the cost by that route will be ten times as much as by the route from Leavenworth, via Laramie, Hall, and Boisé; and, in addition, the major's route is much the longest; and in the months of May and June, from St. Paul west, say one thousand miles, you have much wet and marshy prairie, which I consider impassable.

"Starting in July, then, you could not come through in the same season; and wintering in the mountains north-

east of us would cause much expense, the loss of many animals, and much suffering amongst the men.”<sup>14</sup>

Against Major Steen's unsupported statement that the cost per soldier from Fort Snelling to Washington Territory would be three hundred dollars, Lieutenant Mullan shows an estimate in detail that it would be only fifty-four dollars. The road was used but little for military transportation, though, contrary to Major Steen's prediction, it became an important highway for emigrants to Idaho, Washington and Montana.<sup>15</sup> The construction of the Northern Pacific railroad in 1883 in the main superseded the Mullan road. The arrival of the Northern Pacific railroad at Bismarck in 1873 greatly reduced the traffic from Sioux City, and the last through trip of a commercial steamboat from St. Louis to Fort Benton was made in 1878. Steamboat traffic on the river was reduced and its main initial points changed by the successive arrivals of railroads at the Missouri river from the east,—the Chicago & Northwestern at Council Bluffs in 1867; the Sioux City & Pacific at Sioux City in 1868; the Northern Pacific at Bismarck in 1873; and the body blow was struck when the Great Northern reached Helena, Montana, in 1887. In his booklet, “Nebraska in 1857”, James M. Woolworth said that Omaha “is at present the head of navigation of the Missouri river”. A very promising commercial traffic by barges has recently been established between Kansas City and St. Louis.

In explanation of the fact that the high up Missouri river points mentioned herein are placed in Nebraska, it should be said that until the territory of Dakota was established, March 2, 1861, Nebraska territory extended north to the Canadian boundary and west to the Rocky mountains. The Lieutenant Warren mentioned became famous afterward in our sectional war. He was chief

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>15</sup> Bancroft's Works, v. 31, pp. 384, 406.

engineer of the army of the Potomac and ordered the occupation of Little Round Top on the Gettysburg battlefield, a point of great strategic importance. He participated in the famous battle of Ash Hollow, Nebraska, in 1855, and made important surveys in the territory in 1857-58. *The Century* magazine was published at New York and gave special attention to military affairs. Copies of it are in the public library of Chicago. Its issue of June 16, 1860, describes the *Spread Eagle* as a side-wheel vessel drawing four feet; therefore it could not keep up with the *Chippewa* and the *Key West* which had stern wheels and drew only thirty-two inches. According to Larpenteur,<sup>16</sup> the *Chippewa*, the crack steamboat of the Missouri at that time, reached Fort Brulé, six miles above Marias river and sixteen miles below Benton, July 17, 1859.<sup>17</sup> The boat was burned at

<sup>16</sup> Forty Years a Furtrader, v. 2, pp. 326, 446, notes.

<sup>17</sup> In his report to the commander of the Military Division of the Missouri, dated October 20, 1869, General Winfield S. Hancock, commander of the Department of Dakota, gives interesting information about the navigation of the upper Missouri as follows:

"The navigation of the Missouri River above Sioux City, and, indeed, above St. Louis, may properly be divided into two parts: one to the mouth of the Yellowstone, (Fort Buford,) north of St. Louis two thousand two hundred and thirty-five miles; or of Sioux City, one thousand two hundred and twenty-five miles; the other, above Fort Buford to Fort Benton, the head of navigation, seven hundred and twenty-six miles. Boats drawing three feet of water may reach the mouth of the Yellowstone at almost any time during the season for boating on the Missouri. The Yellowstone is the first great tributary the Missouri receives. It gives the character to the Missouri River below the point of meeting, gives it depth, and changes the color of its waters. The Missouri is a clear stream above its junction with the Yellowstone; below that point it is yellow and muddy as it appears at the mouth of the Missouri. Boats drawing eighteen inches can only reach Fort Benton when the year is a favorable one, after the first high water of spring, derived from the melting snows in the mountains. At Fort Buford, no doubt, will be the point, hereafter, where the larger boats will transfer their loads to craft more suitable for the Upper Missouri. The obstacles met with in a low stage of water are bowlders in the bed of the river, deposited there by floating ice, and which may be felt grating against the bottom of boats at many points during low water. The most noted obstacles of this nature are those at Dauphin Rapids, one hundred and fifty miles below Fort Benton, by water, and thence in a lesser



Disaster Bend, fifteen miles below the mouth of Poplar river, June 23, 1861. "She was a stern-wheeler, 160x32 feet, owned by the A. F. Co., W. H. Humphreys master."

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degree to Cow Island Rapids, thirty-five miles below. When I passed down the river, 9th of July, 1869, the year being an unfavorable one for water, there having been during the winter but little snow in the mountains, we found there were but seventeen inches of water on Dauphin Rapids, and scarcely more at Cow Island. The steam boat "Only Chance", on which we were, drawing that number of inches light and empty, the passengers and baggage having been removed, passed over it with difficulty, and I believe was the last boat to pass over either rapids." (Report of the Secretary of War, 2d sess. 41st cong., v. 1, p. 61.)

## INFLUENCE OF OVERLAND TRAVEL ON THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF NEBRASKA

BY H. G. TAYLOR

[Paper read at the annual meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society, January, 1912.]

Surrounded with comforts of every description, nourished by a prosperity so prodigal that its resources seem exhaustless, conquering and successful, we of Nebraska are inclined to scorn the achievements of the past and claim for ourselves the credit of the accomplishments and high standing of our state. To be sure, there is reason for a vaulting pride. In point of educational efficiency Nebraska heads the list of states. In productivity of soils there is no state of the same area that is her superior, and in the intelligent treatment of these soils her citizens are abreast of the latest thought and method. In the number and quality of her horses, cattle, hogs and other live stock she finds a source of wealth and fame. In the character and prominence of her statesmen, educators and other leaders of thought she is unusually well favored. Pride in these things is pardonable because it forms the basis of a firm and enduring loyalty, but it should not be indulged to the point of forgetting that others besides ourselves are responsible to a large degree for this happy condition.

While over a million of us here in Nebraska are enjoying the comforts and privileges of modern life, we should be reminded now and then that many of our blessings are the fruits that have ripened from the sacrifices, privations, labor and forethought of the men and women who first came to this country and caught the vision of its possibilities. We

need to return now and then to the altar of the past and be endowed therefrom with some of the fire that burned in the hearts of the pioneers. Through all of their vicissitudes their courage remained undaunted, and their spirits mounted to the vision that eventually became a reality. In the face of almost insurmountable difficulties they left the indelible imprint of their plans and work on the history of Nebraska.

It shall not be the purpose of this paper to smother the pioneers with fulsome flatteries, simply because they came here first. There is really no honor or distinction in having lived in one community for a long period of time. Indeed, such an extended residence may suggest the impious thought that it was necessary because the pioneer did not have brains and energy enough to move to some other place. We can claim no credit for entering this world because the advent was not due to our own volition. For the same reason we may stay in one locality simply because it is more comfortable to do that than to go to another. But if the old resident has worked faithfully, if he has had foresight and energy enough to improve the raw conditions, then his deeds are entitled to recognition. And there have been thousands in Nebraska who are deserving of remembrance at our hands.

Little do we realize to-day, as we meditate complacently on the standing of our commonwealth, the dreary and forbidding prospect that faced the pioneers when they came here in the sixties and seventies. Where we see paved streets, verdant fields and beautiful trees, they saw only pathless prairies, shifting sands and buffalo grass. Where we retire each night to the security and comfort of modern homes, they went to bed beside the trail, in dugouts and sod houses, secure only in the knowledge that their safety depended on the whims and designs of bloodthirsty Indians. Where we travel in palace car and automobile, they traveled by ox team and horseback, spending tedious months in



journeys that we accomplish to-day in hours. Where we talk to-day with distant friends as soon as "central" can make the connection, they waited weary months on the occasional freighter and passing traveler. We see as much money in one month's income as they saw after a year's hard toil. We secure princely luxuries with less effort than it required for them to gain dire necessities. A vast contrast! you exclaim. Yea, verily, and the wonder increases when we recall that it covers less than fifty years of time.

In view of what has been accomplished, we have a right to say that Nebraska was favored in the class of people who made the first settlement here, that they were above the average in intelligence, courage and general excellence. It took a certain degree of heroism to even contemplate getting here, to say nothing of staying here after the journey was completed. Only the virile, ambitious, hopeful ones would endure the hardships incident to a six month's overland journey through an uncharted wilderness, with no prospect at the end but years of sacrifice and privation. The gold seekers of 1849 were of this intrepid class. Bleaching bones from the Missouri river to California gave mute testimony to the stern nature of that journey. Nebraska profited from this move westward because it lay in the path of the fortune hunters and the California trail extended from one end of the state to the other. A few of these daring prospectors stopped in the state for one reason or another on the outward journey; and many of them, disappointed in their futile search for wealth in the gold fields, returned to Nebraska to assist in developing an agricultural industry, the products of which surpass in wealth the gold produced in any state in the Union. Other gold seekers hurried across the state to Colorado a little later and, finding the tales of the richness of the mines greatly exaggerated, returned to settle along the trail and establish homes. I need not dwell on the character of the

Mormon empire builders who crossed the state in 1847. Regardless of what we think of their religion, we cannot but marvel at their splendid courage and constructive ability. They were builders and developers the like of which the world has not often seen. Like the others mentioned, their route led them across Nebraska, following what is now known as the old Mormon trail from Omaha and up the Platte valley.<sup>1</sup> Few stopped on the outward journey, but many became dissatisfied with the life in Utah and, retracing their steps eastward, came once again to Nebraska, bringing with them their genius for development. They settled here and there along the trail and became thrifty and progressive ranchers and farmers.

The first general movement westward began in the early sixties, and had it not been for the rude interruption of the civil war doubtless Nebraska would be ten years older in her development. In spite of the war, however, hundreds of prospective home builders found their way to the state during that decade; and among them were some of the sturdiest and most capable men the state has ever had. For example, J. Sterling Morton arrived in 1854. He was a man of power—brilliant, constructive and far-seeing. His influence is still a factor in shaping the development of the state. Of course we remember him best because of his consuming ambition to make this a land of trees. How well he succeeded we need to travel but a few hours to determine. Arbor Day is observed not only in Nebraska but everywhere in the United States, and nodding trees throughout the land whisper gentle tributes to the man

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<sup>1</sup> The pioneer colony of Mormons marched from Winter Quarters (now Florence) by the Mormon road, along the north side of the Platte river; but continuous emigration passed over the Oregon Trail from its beginning at Independence and Westport, and also over the branches from their initial points on the Missouri river—at Leavenworth, Atchison, St. Joseph, Brownville, Nebraska City, Council Bluffs, and other points still farther up the river.—ED.

whose enthusiasm and foresight did much to redeem the deserts and make the waste places habitable. It would come near the truth to say that he was the original conservationist. Undoubtedly there would have been many trees in Nebraska had J. Sterling Morton never lived, but his example and energy brought them sooner and in greater numbers than would have been the case had he not lived.<sup>2</sup> Tree-planting is not the only service, however, for which Nebraska is indebted to Mr. Morton. As a politician and statesman he had ideals that were woven into the governmental design and that have an enduring permanence to this day. His honesty and frankness in political matters were unusual qualities in those days, and the "progressives" of to-day can draw upon his conception of public office with profit and advantage.

Almost equally prominent with him was Robert W. Furnas. Mr. Furnas published the first agricultural paper in the state and always took a deep interest in its agricultural development. As we have indicated above, the state in those days was not very flattering in its promise of fertility and it took a man with a clear vision and much confidence to advocate improved methods and extensive farming. But, like other venturesome spirits who had been attracted by the call of the West, he had faith in the future, and eastern Nebraska particularly is indebted to him for his work in behalf of horticulture and agriculture.

Typical of the genius for overcoming obstacles that was characteristic of the men who carved this kingdom out of a wilderness was the projection and construction of the Union Pacific railroad. While by no means a Nebraska enterprise, this great undertaking was identified closely with the development of the state, and the story of the

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<sup>2</sup> An account of the origin of Arbor Day and of its influence on tree planting may be found in the third volume of the history of Nebraska, page 327.—ED.



making of this great thoroughfare is intermingled with the settlement of the state. No project could have presented a more discouraging aspect. General Grenville M. Dodge, who made surveys for the course of the road, says that when he first saw the country west of the Missouri river it was supposed to be without natural resources or productivity, a vast expanse of arid plain. Tracts of shrubby sagebrush and tumbleweed wearied the eye with their ragged, endless monotony. High winds stripped the surface of the soil, and terrific wind storms drove clouds of dust about. One writer says that "scarcely a mile of the Pacific railroad was built without creating its story of courage, adventure and endurance. The history of the armed conquest of our national expanse is scarce fuller of romance than is that of its industrial conquests in the building of the railroads. As we see later, even this was a conquest, if not by arms, at least under arms." Every line had to be run within range of the muskets of guarding soldiers; there was not a moment's security. Men stacked their arms on new piles of earth and were ready at a moment's notice to fall in and fight for the territory they were sent to win. Handicapped by such obstacles, the men would have been justified in demanding a generous allowance for hasty work and faulty engineering, but they asked for no such consideration. On the contrary, their work was so well done that when a few years ago Edward Harriman commanded his engineers to shorten the Union Pacific line they found that modern engineering could improve but little on the route selected by the original engineers.<sup>3</sup> The spirit that built

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<sup>3</sup> Peter A. Dey was the first chief engineer of the Union Pacific railroad, and he established the eastern end of the line. General Dodge succeeded him in 1866 and directed, in the field, the greater part of the engineering work to the end of the line. Silas Seymour was consulting engineer during the whole period of construction, and his influence in the choice of the line was, no doubt, great, though the main practical responsibility was borne, doubtless, by General Dodge.—Ed.

the Union Pacific was the spirit that settled Nebraska. Indeed, many of the very men who helped to build the one tarried to assist in the development of the other, lending their genius and courage to the making of a state.

It was in the early seventies that the general settlement of the state began. Following the war the discharged soldiers, turning westward in search of homes, were attracted to Nebraska, and thousands of them arrived in a short time. No better citizens ever lived. Inured to hardships, schooled in discipline, abounding in patriotism, they had been tried in the fires of a mighty conflict and were fit subjects out of which to make a commonwealth. The majority of them were young men, and they had families. They came to make homes and there was nothing of uncertainty about their purpose. They were terribly in earnest; for they were without much means and their whole future depended on their efforts. They came largely in families, companies and a few colonies, which did much to create a home atmosphere from the beginning. It is not strange, therefore, that their first concern was to establish schools and churches. The experience, for instance, of Samuel C. Bassett, of Buffalo county, furnishes a striking illustration of this early desire for educational advantages. Mr. Bassett reached Buffalo county with a colony, April 7, 1871. At that time but four claims had been filed in the United States land office, and not an acre of railroad land had been sold. The county had been organized less than one year.<sup>4</sup> The

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<sup>4</sup> It is more accurate to say that Buffalo county was reorganized about a year before this time. The first territorial legislature passed an act, March 16, 1855, declaring that certain prescribed territory "is hereby organized into a county to be called Buffalo" and constituting Nebraska Center the county seat. (Laws of Nebraska 1-3 Territorial Sessions, p. 339.) In 1859 the territorial canvassing board counted the vote purporting to have been cast in Buffalo county for a delegate to congress; but in the ensuing contest at Washington the house of representatives threw it out on the ground that the county was not organized at the time of the election.

families lived in the cars until they could build homes. On the 15th of April, 1871, before any members of this company had filed on homesteads, and while they were yet living in the cars, a meeting was held to consider the organization of a school district. On the 22d of April a meeting was held, school district officers were elected, and a tax voted to build a schoolhouse. Think of it! Within two weeks after the arrival of this little company of pioneers and before they had even commenced to erect homes of their own, even before they were certain that they would have homes, taxes had been voted to build a schoolhouse! And in less than three months a term of school began in the wing of a private house, just completed. Do you wonder that Nebraska is able to boast of the lowest percentage of illiteracy of any state in the Union?<sup>5</sup> Is it surprising that the state is right in the forefront of all progress

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The county voted at the congressional elections of 1860 and 1866, and at the provisional state election, June 2, 1866.

At the eighth session of the territorial legislature an act was passed, December 31, 1861, constituting Hall, Buffalo, Kearney, and Lincoln, counties a legislative district. (Laws of Nebraska Eighth Territorial Session, p. 107.) At the eleventh session of the territorial legislature an act was passed, February 12, 1866, authorizing the probate judge of Buffalo county "to appoint all officers in said county necessary to complete county and precinct organizations", who should hold their respective offices until their successors were elected and qualified. The probate judge was authorized also "to demand and receive all the records . . . belonging to said county", and to keep them until the proper officers for their custody were elected and qualified. Thus Buffalo exercised distinct county functions intermittently from 1860 until its permanent organization in 1870. (Special Laws of the Eleventh Territorial Session, p. 710.) By the act of June 12, 1867, Buffalo county was placed in the third judicial district. (Laws of Nebraska Third Session, p. 50.) By the act of February 10, 1871, Buffalo county was attached to Hall county for judicial purposes. (Laws of Nebraska 1870-71, p. 195.) By the act of February 27, 1873, terms of the district court to be held in Buffalo county were appointed. (General Statutes 1873, p. 260.)—ED.

<sup>5</sup> The percentages of illiteracy in the three states having the lowest rate for the four decades ending 1880, 1890, 1900, 1910, are as follows: 1880: Wyoming, 3.4; Nebraska, 3.6; Iowa, 3.9. 1890: Nebraska, 3.1; Wyoming, 3.4; Iowa, 3.6. 1900: Nebraska, 2.3; Iowa, 2.3; Oregon, 3.3.



in educational matters and that other states are demanding our educators as fast as we can produce them? Our standing in these things is not a matter of chance. It was determined by the men and women who had a passion for self-improvement and who laid a foundation so broad and deep that we could not overturn it if we would. To be sure, Nebraska is favored by many advantages in the way of geographical location, climatic conditions, soil fertility, transportation facilities and unlimited natural resources; but it took the vision, the foresight and the indomitable will of the pioneers to make them full measure of benefit. These little clusters of war veterans, with their families and friends, composed an influence that ramified into every part of the political, commercial, social and moral life of the community.

It would be easy to cite other examples to show that in the play of the great forces that shaped the destiny of this nation Nebraska was favored as only one or two other states were favored; but we have indicated enough to show that Nebraska civilization grew from good seed, selected without a doubt by the great Agriculturist Himself and cultivated according to his eternal design.

I cannot leave the subject, however, without turning my eyes for a moment from the past to the future. We must remember that the success of the pioneers depended almost wholly on the fact that they kept their eyes steadfastly to the front; and we will not be true to the spirit that dominated them if we do not follow their example. It is our duty to acknowledge the obligation we owe to the men and women who handed us an empire, enduring and glorious, which they had fashioned out of a wilderness, but their splendid example will be lost if we halt, contented

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1910: Iowa, 1.7; Nebraska, 1.9; Oregon, 1.9. (Twelfth Census U. S. 1900, v. 2, Population Part 2, p. c; Thirteenth Census, 1910, Abstract With Nebraska Supplement, p. 245)—ED.

with what has already been accomplished. Croly says, "All history is but a romance unless it is studied as an example." There is much of the desert to conquer yet, many streams to bridge, many schools to build, many farms to improve, many resources to develop, many wrongs to right and many problems to solve. The future has a challenge to strong men as compelling as any that came to the pioneers of fifty years ago, and it will be as rich as the past if we keep our minds open to the visions that they had and our hearts free to make them come true. In closing I am tempted to borrow a verse that the poet, Harry Kemp, has recently dedicated to Kansas, because it is expressive of the sentiments and aspirations of all loyal Nebraskans—

"Let other countries glory in their Past,  
But Nebraska [Kansas] glories in her days to be,  
In her horizons, limitless and vast,  
Her plains that storm the senses like the sea:  
She has no ruins grey that men revere—  
Her time is Now, her Heritage is Here."

## INCIDENTS OF THE EARLY SETTLEMENT OF NUCKOLLS COUNTY

BY GEORGE D. FOLLMER

[Paper read at the annual meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society, January, 1912.]

In the winter of 1870-71 I started with a team and an old style mail buckboard from Grant, in Montgomery county, Iowa. I passed through Red Oak and Sidney, crossing the Missouri river at Nebraska City, and thence, by way of Beatrice, to Oak Grove Ranch in Nuckolls county. I struck the Oregon Trail at the Helvey Ranch on Big Sandy in Jefferson county. There were but few settlers between this point and Meridian where there was a small store and post office kept by Hugh Ross. From Meridian to Kiowa Ranch (in Thayer county, kept by E. Vanderwork) there were no settlements; and there were none along the trail between Kiowa Ranch and Oak Grove Ranch which was situated at the mouth of a large draw on the north side of the Little Blue river, in the northwest quarter of section 15, township 3, range 5 west of the sixth principal meridian. The ranch house was erected in September, 1865, by E. S. Comstock. The stockade on the south side of the house was put up by Philip Michael in April, 1870. The house was twenty-four feet in length and fourteen in width, with an addition on the north side eight feet by ten feet. The main building had one story.

About fifty feet a little east and south from the house, the first election for the organization of Nuckolls county was held under a large elm tree, on the twenty-seventh of June, 1871. Thirty-two votes were cast at this election.



D. W. Montgomery drove to Lincoln to induce Governor W. H. James to order an election at which officers were chosen as follows: Judges of election, Philip Michael, Jonas Hannum; Alexander Naylor; clerks of election, Thomas B. Johnson, Charles W. Goodman; county officers: commissioners, Adam Simonton, Jonas Hannum, Alexander Naylor; clerk, Elbridge L. Downing; treasurer, Willis Henby; superintendent of public instruction, Charles W. Goodman; probate judge, Abner E. Davis; sheriff, A. Edwards; surveyor, D. W. Montgomery; coroner, James Candy.

Mr. Thaine, who had homesteaded the south half of the southeast quarter and the south half of the southwest quarter of section 23, township 3, range 5, was killed by Indians in May, 1870—the last person killed by Indians in Nuckolls county. The first white child born in the county after the organization was Ella Simonton.

There were buffaloes, antelopes, elks, deer and wild turkeys in abundance in 1871, but the Oto and Omaha Indians soon chased them out.

The nearest post office in 1871 and 1872 was at Meridian, thirty-two miles from Oak Grove Ranch. The nearest mill was at Beatrice. The first railroad in the county was the St. Joseph and Western, which was built across the northeast corner of the county about 1872.<sup>1</sup> At present Nuckolls county ranks third in the state in length of railroad track, having 141.59 miles. The Burlington & Missouri company has three lines, and the Chicago & Northwestern, Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific, Missouri Pacific, Santa Fe, St. Joseph and Grand Island have a single line each. Only one township is without a railroad. Nelson, the county seat, was surveyed in the winter of 1872 and 1873. The court-

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<sup>1</sup> This road was built by the St. Joseph & Denver City Railroad Company, and was opened to Hastings in 1872. It was called the St. Joseph & Western after it was taken over by the new company of that name in 1877.—ED.

house was built in the spring of 1873. The first district court was held in a small frame building May, 1873, by Judge Daniel Gantt and prosecuting attorney A. J. Weaver. The county records were moved from D. W. Montgomery's residence on the n. w.  $\frac{1}{4}$  s. 8, t. 3, r. 5, to the new courthouse in September, 1873. The first female child born at the county seat was a daughter of J. M. Shank, and the first male child was C. S. Follmer.

The first frame house in the county was built in 1871 by D. W. Montgomery on the northwest quarter of section 8, township 3, range 5. The siding, finishing lumber, and shingles were hauled from Fairbury, Jefferson county.

The length of the Oregon Trail in Nuckolls county was about sixteen miles. It ran through the following sections, townships and ranges: Sections 13, 14, 15, 16, 9, 8, 7, 6, township 3, range 5; n. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$  s. 1, t. 3, r. 6; sections 36, 35, 26, 23, 22, 15, 16, 9, 8, 7, 6, t. 4, r. 6; n.  $\frac{1}{2}$  s. 2, t. 4, r. 7. The trail is nearly obliterated in this county but traces remain on the e.  $\frac{1}{2}$  of w.  $\frac{1}{2}$  of n. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , s. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of s. 14, t. 3, r. 5 where it comes out of a draw; also on the n. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , s. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , s. 15, t. 3, r. 5, where it leaves the bottom to get on higher ground. Then again on the n. w.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , s. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , s. 15, t. 3, r. 5, as it comes out of the draw onto higher ground. The next point is on the n. w.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of n. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , s. 16, t. 3, r. 5, as it comes out of the draw on the south side. Then on the n. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$  s. 7, t. 3, r. 5, where it leaves the third bottom through a cut to the second bottom. It is visible again east of The Narrows, on the s. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , s. w.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , s. 6, t. 3, r. 5; also on the e.  $\frac{1}{2}$ , s. w.  $\frac{1}{4}$  and n.  $\frac{1}{2}$  of n. w.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , s. 36, t. 4, r. 6. The last sign is where it leaves the Nine Mile Ridge on the west side of the n.  $\frac{1}{2}$  s. 1, t. 4, r. 7.

The massacre on the Little Blue occurred on Sunday afternoon August 7, 1864. The attack seemed general along the Little Blue extending east within a mile of Kiowa Ranch in Thayer county. At this point one of the Eubank

boys was killed and scalped. Two of the Eubank boys were killed and scalped on n.  $\frac{1}{2}$  of n. w.  $\frac{1}{4}$  16-3-5 and were buried under an elm tree on s. w.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of s. w.  $\frac{1}{4}$  8-3-5 on the banks of the Little Blue. It is stated that nine of these were killed. William Eubank and the others were killed on n. w.  $\frac{1}{4}$  7 & s. w.  $\frac{1}{4}$  6-3-5, all on August 7, 1864. The wife and child of one Eubank boy and Miss Laura Roper were carried off captives. Because the child was fretful it was killed soon after starting. In about six months these women were exchanged near Denver, Colorado, for Indian prisoners.<sup>2</sup> Those killed at Oak Grove Ranch August 7, 1864, were W. R. Kelley and a man by the name of Butler. Those who escaped were E. S. Comstock sr.; Harry C. Comstock; J. M. Comstock, wife and child; Mrs. Francis Blush and child; Sarah Comstock; Mary Comstock; Ella Butler; Tobias Castor; George Hunt. A man by the name of Ostrander was wounded and died a short time afterward in Seneca, Kansas. George Hunt, at present county commissioner of Saline county, Nebraska, was wounded in the calf of the leg.

The bodies of Kelley and Butler were put into the small smokehouse on Monday, August 8, before the people left. The building, smokehouse and stable were burnt sometime Monday. The bodies in the smokehouse were nearly cremated when found on Thursday, August 11, by J. M. Comstock, James Douglas, John Gilbert and others, who had returned to bury them.

The size of the building burnt was 40 x 22, with a kitchen on west side, 40 x 12, and a bedroom on north side,

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<sup>2</sup> Stories of this Oak Grove tragedy and the recovery of the captives are conflicting. Various authorities are cited in footnote 1 of my history of the Indian war on the Nebraska plains, ms. Nebraska State Historical Society. See, also, the account of Captain Henry E. Palmer, *History of Nebraska*, v. 2, p. 188, note; *Kansas Historical Collections*, v. 8, p. 354; *History of Wyoming* (Coutant) p. 441.—Ed.



12 x 22. The main building was two stories and was built by Charles and Preston Butler in 1859.

The Emery incident occurred August 9, 1864. He saved nine stagecoach passengers by discovering an Indian pony in a clump of willows as he was about to descend into the bottom land. He coolly turned his four horses and started on the race for life. He was fortunate enough to meet George Constable's ox train. Constable, seeing him coming, corralled the train and saved all in the coach. E. Umphrey, and G. G. and Hattie Randolph presented Emery a short time before his death with a fine gold ring. It was lost in 1885.

This incident was reported at the time to have taken place near the The Narrows; but it occurred on the southwest quarter of section 13, township 3, range 5, which is five to six miles east of The Narrows. George Constable was afterwards killed by the Indians on the divide between Elk Creek and the Little Blue and buried in the brakes of the Little Blue on the northeast quarter of section 35, township 4, range 6. A considerable number of wagons loaded with goods were burned on this quarter section. Pieces of crockery can now be found at this place.

Following are the names of ranches from Kiowa, Thayer county, Nebraska, to Kearney, Nebraska; also those that had charge August 7, 1864. The location is given of those in Nuckolls county. Kiowa Ranch, Thayer county, James Douglas; Oak Grove Ranch, E. S. Comstock; Eubank Ranch, Eubanks, on the n. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , n. w.  $\frac{1}{4}$  s. 7, t. 3, r. 5; Ewing or Kelley Ranch, by W. R. Kelley, on the n. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of n. w.  $\frac{1}{4}$  s. 1, t. 3, r. 6; Little Blue station, by J. M. Comstock, on the s. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of n. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$  s. 35, t. 4, r. 6; Buffalo Ranch, by Milligan and Mudge, s. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$ , n. e.  $\frac{1}{4}$  s. 2, t. 4, r. 7; Liberty Farm, by Charles Emery; Pawnee Ranch, by Jas. Bainter; Spring Ranch, by Nute Metcalf; Lone Tree Ranch, party not known by writer; Elm Tree Ranch, by William Moody;

Thirty-two Mile Creek Ranch by George and Ansel Comstock; Hook or Junction Ranch, by Hook. At this point the road from Omaha formed a junction with the Oregon Trail nine miles east of Kearney. The incidents along the Oregon Trail were given by a party who lived on the trail from 1862 till after the massacre, and who was at Oak Grove ranch Sunday morning, August 7, 1864.

## FIRST STEAMBOAT TRIAL TRIP UP THE MISSOURI

BY ALBERT WATKINS

If we do not wish to go so far with skepticism or cynicism as to endorse the old apothegm, "Might makes right", we may hit off a compromise by agreeing that, at any rate, might secures right and then find a good illustration of our maxim in our western frontier conditions from the time of the treaty of 1783, which recognized the independence of our colonies and the Mississippi river as our western boundary line, until the Oregon question was settled in 1846. For some time after the treaty of independence England insolently kept up military establishments on our western frontier; and France and Spain, the other two great powers, continued to menace and snub us. We won their respectful consideration only when our growing military might could command it. Even after the war of 1812-15, England continued to covet trade with our upper Missouri Indians and to take unwarranted liberties in that region.

This mixed Indian-English question led to the establishment, in 1819, of Fort Atkinson, the first military post within the Nebraska Country and the first of more than local importance on the Missouri river; and, incidentally, to the first attempt at steamboat navigation of the upper Missouri. The expressed expectations of the expedition, flowing from its ostensible objects, carry the mind back to the vaunted hopes and glories of the voyages of Columbus, Cabot, Magellan and others of the period of continental discovery and investigation. It was charged to spy out



the land with reference to topography, animal and vegetable products, actual and prospective, and ascertain as certainly as practicable its northern boundary, the better to judge of and repress British encroachment; to impress the Indian occupants with white prowess by means of military demonstrations and the wonderful method of transportation by steamboats; and, under this spell, to make favorable treaties with the Indians and ascertain the most favorable points for establishing military posts. The enterprise was to be a second edition of the Lewis and Clark expedition but with the impressive adjunct of the pomp and circumstance of power. In this respect it proved disastrously top-heavy; in apter metaphor, perhaps, the tail so effectively wagged the dog as to effectually break the animal down long before the accomplishment of his ostentatious journey. This great conception for illuminating the magnificence of ends and means put the trans-Missouri country and, inclusively, the Nebraska section of it, in the public eye almost as conspicuously as the Kansas-Nebraska bill did a generation later.

President Monroe, in his message to congress, November 16, 1818, said: "With a view to the security of our inland frontiers it has been thought expedient to establish strong posts at the mouth of the Yellow Stone River, and at the Mandan village on the Missouri. It can hardly be presumed, while such posts are maintained in the rear of the Indian tribes, that they will venture to attack our peaceable inhabitants."<sup>1</sup> It was also contended that this movement would ultimately promote civilization of the Indians who would be unable to exist alongside of the civilized whites; to prevent their extinction they must be under dependent control of the United States.<sup>2</sup> No mention is made of establishing a post at Council Bluffs, whose

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<sup>1</sup> State Papers, 2d Sess., 15th Cong., 1818-19, v. 1, doc. 2, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

invention as a substitute for the original plan turned out to be the child of necessity. The president correctly forecasted the ultimate Indian policy; but he was mistaken in his forecast of its results, for the extermination he would have prevented, professedly, goes on inexorably, and no practicable policy could have avoided it.

*Nile's Register*, v. 15, p. 117, quotes from the St. Louis *Enquirer* an interesting statement of the objects of the expedition. A battalion of the Rifle regiment, three hundred strong, embarked at Belle Fontaine September 4, 1818, to ascend the Missouri to the mouth of the Yellowstone to establish a post there. This advance force was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Talbot Chambers. The three captains were Martin, Merger and Riley. It was intended that the expedition should encamp for the winter at the mouth of the Kansas and continue its voyage in the spring. The officers were instructed to carry such seed grains as it was expected would thrive in that climate. Wheat, barley, rye and oats, it was believed, would do well there. "The Mandan corn will find itself in its own climate" there. A reason for this provision was "that the post may have within itself some resource against the failure of contractors . . . Our fellow citizen, Manuel Lisa, so well known for his enterprise, will precede the expedition to prepare the Indians for its reception. He will quiet their apprehensions by showing the benevolent and humane intentions of the American government and will silence the British emissaries who shall represent the expedition as an act of war against the Indian nations. The establishment of this post will be an era in the history of the west. It will go to the source of the fatal British influence which has for so many years armed the Indian nations against our western frontiers. It carries the arms and power of the United States to the ground which has hitherto been exclusively occupied by the British North West and Hudson's Bay companies, and

which has been the true seat of the British power over the Indian mind . . . The North West and Hudson's Bay companies will be shut out from the commerce of the Missouri and Mississippi Indians; the American traders will penetrate in safety the recesses of the rocky mountains in search of its rich fur; a commerce yielding a million per annum will descend the Missouri; and the Indians, finding their wants supplied by the American traders, their domestic wars restrained by American policy, will learn to respect the American name." The article then proceeds to describe the Yellowstone in glowing terms. The same volume of the *Register* (p. 160) copies from the *Inquisitor* a private letter, dated Belle Fontaine, September 4, 1818, saying the troops, three hundred and fifty strong, left there on the 30th ult.; their equipment was extensive, including six boats and a tender. They proceeded with ease.

Captain (Brevet Major) Thomas Biddle, of the Rifle regiment, also a handy journalist-historian military attache of the expedition, at the request of Colonel Henry Atkinson, its commander, reported to that officer<sup>3</sup> from "Camp Missouri", October 29, 1819, results of his personal observations among the Osage, Kansas, Oto and Missouri, Iowa, Pawnee, and Omaha tribes of Indians and some account of the trade between whites and Indians. The history of the trade on the Missouri river under the Spanish and French colonial governments, "would be the recital of the expeditions of vagrant hunters and traders who never ventured up the river beyond a few miles of this place. The return of Captains Lewis and Clark, and the favorable account they brought with them of the rich furs to be obtained on the upper branches of the Missouri, and the respectful reception which their admirable deportment towards the natives had

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<sup>3</sup> State Papers 1819-20, 1st Sess., 16th Cong., doc. 47, p. 2; American State Papers, v. 6—Indian Affairs, v. 2, p. 201.



gained for them, encouraged Manuel Lisa, one of the most enterprising of these traders, to venture up the Missouri with a small trading equipment, as far as the Yellow Stone river,"—in 1807. The party passed the winter of 1807-8 "at the mouth of the Yellow Stone and Big Horn Rivers." John Coulter was dispatched by Lisa to the forks of the Missouri "to find the Blackfeet nation and bring them to his establishment to trade"—the first of these Indians which had been met having been friendly; but Coulter fell in with the Crows, who were attacked by Blackfeet; and he helped his hosts and so incurred the enmity of their assailants. Afterward they attacked Coulter, killing his companion; and soon attacked the whites without parley. This was the origin of the hostility, "which has prevented American traders from penetrating the fur country of the Missouri." Lisa returned to St. Louis in 1808, and the Missouri Fur Company was organized in 1809; its object being "to monopolize the trade among the lower tribes of the Missouri" and to send a large party to the headwaters "capable of defending and trapping beaver themselves." The principal partners went up with a party of about one hundred and fifty and left small trading establishments at the Arikara, Mandan, and Gros Ventre villages. The main body wintered at Lisa's old trading post at the junction of the Yellowstone and the Bighorn. In the spring of 1810 they went to the Three Forks of the Missouri, erected a fort and began trapping with good prospects; but soon the Blackfeet attacked them and killed thirty of their number. Then the whole party crossed the mountains southwardly and wintered on the waters of the Columbia, suffering great privations. A part returned discouraged down the Missouri, but others went south to Spanish settlements via the Rio del Norte. The company languished through 1812, 1813, and 1814, and then expired.

In 1808 another company of eighty men, headed by McClinnon [McClellan] and Crooks, soon after leaving Camp Missouri met the government boat which had returned home the Mandan chief taken to Washington by Lewis and Clark. The boat had been attacked by the Stricherons.<sup>4</sup> This hostility discouraged the party but they followed the Missouri Fur Company's party up the river in 1809. The Sconi Sioux stopped them; but they escaped and, returning, wintered—1809-10—at the Oto village. They attributed the Indian hostility to the Missouri Fur Company. In 1811 these traders (apparently meaning "McClinnon" and Crooks) added Wilson P. Hunt to their association, "and appear to have acted under the direction of Mr. Astor of New York." They ascended again, "but they carried no goods nor made any attempts to trade or trap on the Missouri; whatever might have been their intentions, they were probably frustrated by the war of 1812."<sup>5</sup> All these disasters extinguished enterprise on the Missouri. Two companies since formed had dissolved, unsuccessful, and a third was in operation, independent of several individual traders; but there were no attempts to carry on trade beyond the Arikara, and traders did not often venture beyond the upper band of the Sioux. Traders cheated one another and set a bad example to Indians. They made the Omaha, and particularly Chief Big Elk, drunk with whiskey to get their furs.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Probably a misspelling of Starrahe, an early name of the Arikara.

<sup>5</sup>It is asserted in historical documents and also by many local contemporaneous persons that this Astorian expedition established a post at Bellevue which turned out to be the first permanent settlement in the territory now included in Nebraska. This statement of Biddle's is cumulative evidence that there is no foundation for the allegations in question. For a critical discussion of this topic see Collections Nebraska State Historical Society, volume 16, page 68, footnote 3.

<sup>6</sup>Augustus Choteau (State Papers 1815-16, 1st Sess., 14th Cong., v. 3, p. 104) says the Missouri river furs amounted in 1805 to \$77,971, and now—1815—going no farther up than the Omahas and Poncas, and adding

Though this famous adventure became commonly known as the Yellowstone Expedition, the war department appears to have called it "the expedition to the Mandan villages on the Missouri river". January 15, 1820, Thomas S. Jesup, quartermaster-general, reported to John C. Calhoun, secretary of war, the agreement with James Johnson of Kentucky. The contract, signed December 2, 1818, provided that Johnson should have two steamboats ready by March 1, 1819, "calculated to navigate the Mississippi and its waters", which should be "charged with the transportation of provisions and munitions of war, detachments and their baggage, or other articles, to the military posts on said waters, viz: the mouth of the St. Peters, near the Falls of St. Anthony; the mouth of the Yellow Stone on the Missouri, and Bellepoint on the Arkansas; and all other points, whether intermediate or beyond those enumerated". If two boats were not sufficient,

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that of the St. Peters, Red, Crow's Wing, and "a great many more of the Mississippi", \$150,000. William Clark, governor of Missouri Territory, said (*ibid.*, p. 101) that Choteau had been familiar with Indians for fifty years, "a part of which time the greater part of the Indian trade of this country was conducted by him." Choteau contended that the reason why the United States factors could not compete with British traders' goods was that the former did not go to the Indians but they—the Indians—must go a long way to the factories and then got but limited credit, while the British traders followed them up and catered to their wants, especially in credit, without which they cannot go on their hunts. He thought that, with a store with a capital of \$100,000 established at St. Louis by the government and conducted by thoroughly practical Indian traders, furs worth \$200,000 could be brought annually from the Missouri river, between Cedar Island, above the Ponca, and headwaters. The Northwestern Company of Canada, he believed, was getting 200,000 pounds sterling from Indians in the neighborhood of the branches on the left side of the Missouri. The governor thought that such a company with a capital of six hundred thousand to a million dollars would "sweep the whole of the valuable fur trade of the Missouri and [upper] Mississippi rivers; expel all the petty, though now very powerful British traders, and bring into our markets immense quantities of the most valuable fur and peltries." (*Ibid.*, p. 96.) Choteau thought the government ought to establish this company, and Clark that it should receive "liberal aid and encouragement from the government."



on due and reasonable notice, Johnson was to provide one other or more boats, "as the case may require." If, "upon experiment", it should be found impracticable to do all the transportation with steamboats then Johnson should, "in a reasonable time, say thirty days, provide a sufficient number of keel boats" to supply the deficiency. It was agreed that two arbitrators, one to be chosen by each party and a third by the original two arbitrators in case they could not agree, should settle all differences about compensation "other than ordinary freight."

Knox, Halderman & Co., of the town of St. Louis, agreed, July 1819, to furnish, from time to time and on ten days notice during the present year, such number of well rigged keel boats as might be required for the transportation of troops, provisions, and all other articles to the several military posts on the Mississippi and Missouri rivers." For the conveyance and safe delivery of such stores as may be delivered them for transportation to the Council Bluffs, the company was to be paid \$5.50 per hundred pounds; to Martin Cantonment, \$4 per hundred pounds. Whereas circumstances might render it necessary to send empty boats "some distance up the Missouri to take on board the troops, provisions, and other stores, now ascending," the company was to have \$2,327.27 for every such boat of thirty tons and not over thirty-three tons thus freighted, if sent to Martin Cantonment, and \$3,200 if sent to the Council Bluffs; for each boat over thirty-three tons and not over thirty-six tons, \$2,700 to Martin Cantonment and \$3,400 to Council Bluffs. In a contract signed at St. Louis, August 18, 1819, John Walls agreed to take a keel boat of at least thirty-five tons burden to the steamboat Jefferson, "now lying near the mouth of Petite Bonne Femme creek (about one hundred and fifty miles above the mouth of Missouri)", and there receive a full load of troops and provisions and other stores and proceed to

Martin Cantonment or the Council Bluffs, "as may be directed by the commanding officer of the expedition."<sup>7</sup>

The signatories of the Johnson contract were James Johnson, principal, and William Ward, John T. Johnson, Joel Johnson, and Henry Johnson, sureties. Richard M. Johnson held their power of attorney. Thomas S. Jesup, quartermaster-general, signed for the United States.<sup>8</sup> These Johnsons were a notable Kentucky family, and their dauntless spirit (as manifested in this hazardous pioneer adventure) had already won national fame for two of them. Richard Mentor Johnson, the most conspicuous personage of the family, was a leader in the movement of 1802 to raise a force of Kentucky and Tennessee frontiersmen to descend the Mississippi and compel the Spaniards to grant them the right of navigation to its mouth and facilities for trade at New Orleans. He was a member of the Kentucky legislature; then of the national house of representatives, from 1807 to 1819; of the United States senate from 1819 to 1829; again of the house of representatives; vice president during Van Buren's presidency; and back to the state legislature again. But he won more fame in war than in politics. When the war of 1812 broke out he raised, and was colonel of, a regiment of Kentucky mounted riflemen; and the brilliant charge of his regiment brought victory at the battle of the Thames, in 1813. His successful hand-to-hand fight with an Indian chief, supposed to have been Tecumseh, the famous Shawnee chief, added additional glory to this exploit.

There is an imposing monument of Colonel Johnson on the state house grounds at Frankfort, Kentucky; and it is related in *Niles Register*<sup>9</sup> that a magnificent sword, manufactured by order of congress, was presented to him

<sup>7</sup> State Papers, 1st Session, 16th Congress, v. 3, doc. 50, pp. 5-10.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 2d Sess., 16th Cong., v. 8, doc. 110, pp. 7, 8.

<sup>9</sup> April 22, 1820, v. 18, p. 151.

by the president of the United States. One side of the hilt bore the arms of the United States; on the other was this inscription: "Voted by act of Congress to Col. Richard M. Johnson, in testimony of the sense of his gallantry in the battle of the Thames in Upper Canada, October 5th, 1813."

James Johnson was lieutenant colonel of the regiment; and while his brother was putting the Indian contingent of the enemy to rout he successfully charged the wing composed of British soldiers. After his remarkable campaign amidst the perils of steamboating on the Missouri river, he, also, entered politics and became a member of the lower house of the 19th Congress—1825-6. Johnson county, Nebraska, was named for Richard M. Johnson, probably through the influence of early settlers from Indiana or Kentucky; and, on account of a like association, the county seat was named Tecumseh.<sup>10</sup> The provision for

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<sup>10</sup> The first legislative assembly of Nebraska, by the act of March 2, 1855, defined the boundaries of Johnston county. The act designated John B. Robertson, Jesse Cowles and John A. Singleton as commissioners "to locate the seat of justice in said county", which "shall be called 'Frances' ". Robertson was a member of the house from Burt county; and Singleton a member of the house from Richardson county. Cowles was a brother of James H. Cowles, member of the house from Pierce, afterward Otoe county.

Contemporary and other early historians fatuously alleged that Frances was the name of Colonel Johnson's wife and that the intended capital of Johnson county was her namesake. The fact that this statement has been accepted without contradiction illustrates the easy fallibility of history. Reliable information just obtained by the editor, from Kentucky, establishes the fact that Colonel Johnson was never married; though he lived out of wedlock with a woman—a negress, strange to say—to whose children he left his considerable fortune. It is probable that the legislature intended to name the coming county seat after Francis Burt, the first governor of the territory. The discrepancy in the spelling of the name should not be permitted to weaken this theory because misspelling was so common in the public prints of those days that its occurrence in any given case might almost be presumed. For example: in the title of the act to establish the county and several times in its body the name of the county is spelled with a t, making it Johnston; while it is twice spelled without the t, making it Johnson, as it was doubtless intended to be.



arbitration in the contract was doubtless due to recognition or anticipation of the great hazard and uncertainty of the undertaking; but, apparently, the Johnsons relied more upon their influence at Washington than upon judicial

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This first Johnston, or Johnson, county lay immediately west of Nemaha. By act of the second assembly it was absorbed by Nemaha and Clay. The third legislature—of 1857—re-established Johnson county with its present territory, taken from the west end of Nemaha and the north side of Pawnee. The same legislature added the northeast corner of Pawnee county to Nemaha, making its south boundary line continuous with that of Johnson. A county government was at least formally organized near the end of the year 1856; but it was ignored by the act of 1857. Johnson county was also placed in the second judicial district by an act of the same session. It was first included in the legislative apportionment by Governor Izard in his election proclamation of May 30, 1857 (see *Nebraska Advertiser*, June 11, 1857), Johnson and Nemaha comprising the representative district, and was represented for the first time in the fourth legislative assembly, which convened December 8, 1857. Albert J. Benedict, Samuel A. Chambers, and John S. Minick, all residents of Nemaha county, were the members of the house of representatives from the district. The county participated in a general election, for the first time, in 1857, when it cast 70 votes. (*Nebraska Advertiser*, August 13, 1857; Records of Nebraska Territory, p. 140) Councilmen were elected in the even numbered years; but Governor Richardson made no apportionment in his election proclamation of 1858; yet the clerk of Nemaha county designated Nemaha and Johnson counties as a councilmanic district in his election notice, though without legal authority. (*Nebraska Advertiser*, June 24, 1858) An act of the second legislative assembly, January 26, 1856, authorized the governor of the territory to apportion the membership of the council and the house of representatives on the basis of a census to be taken between August 1st and September 1st, 1856, and fixed the number of the members of the house for the next session at thirty-five. (Laws of 2d session, p. 181) This act was the basis of Governor Izard's apportionment for the 3d assembly, (*Nebraska Advertiser*, Sept. 20, 1856), which convened January 5th, 1857. The organic act provided that the governor should apportion the districts for the first session; "but, thereafter, . . . the apportioning the representation in the several counties or districts to the council and house of representatives . . . shall be prescribed by law, as well as the day of the commencement of the legislative assembly . . ." It is pretty clear that under this fundamental law the legislature could not depute the governor to apportion the representation; and perhaps it was because Governor Richardson was a lawyer of ability that he did not undertake to make an apportionment in his election proclamation of 1858. In a newspaper clipping, pasted on the page of the Records of Nebraska Territory (p. 193) which contains a copy of the proclamation, it is said that, "We believe the former executive (Izard) issued proclamations for general elections, by

adjustment; and so it seems as if they played a bold bluff from first to last.

Items in the *State Papers* from time to time constitute an official account, in considerable detail, of the progress of the enterprise.

*State Papers*, 1st session 16th Congress, v. 1, doc. 2, p. 11, the president's message, December 7, 1819, says: "The troops ordered to the mouth of the Yellow Stone, on the Missouri, have ascended that river to the Council Bluff, where they will remain until the next spring, when they will proceed to the place of their destination." This measure, the president says, has been executed in amity with the Indian tribes and promises to produce all the advantages which were contemplated by it.

The president's message, November 14, 1820, says: "Our military positions have been maintained at Belle Point, on the Arkansas, at Council Bluff, on the Missouri, at St. Peters on the Mississippi, and at Green Bay on the

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what authority we do not know. There is certainly nothing in the law requiring it. We speak by authority when we say that Governor Richardson understands the law and his duty better". The writer then says that it is the duty of county commissioners to issue election notices and urges them not to neglect it. The governor's proclamation in question gave notice that a territorial auditor would be elected on the day of the general election, to fill a vacancy.

Nevertheless, Robert W. Furnas canvassed Johnson county in his campaign of 1858, as a candidate for councilman, and published the election returns from the two counties jointly for councilman and members of the house of representatives. (*Nebraska Advertiser*, July 22, and August 12, 1858.) In the *Advertiser* of July 29, Furnas says, with emphasis, that he will be a representative "of the entire people of Nemaha county"; which suggests that he knew, or thought, that he would represent Johnson county only informally. The act of the fifth general assembly, November 3, 1858, apportioned members of the house of representatives, but not of the council; and Johnson, Clay, and Gage counties were constituted a representative district. This status continued until the ninth assembly—act of January 28, 1864—apportioned members of the council and house of representatives, constituting Pawnee, Gage, Johnson, Clay, and Jones the eleventh council district and Johnson a representative district. This apportionment was incorporated in the revised statutes of 1866.

Upper Lakes". Commodious barracks had been erected at most of them. No mention is made of the reason for the change to Council Bluffs. (Ibid., 2d Sess. 16th Congress, v. 11, doc. 2, p. 8).

First land on the Missouri river purchased for military purposes at Belle Fontaine—"tract on the Missouri"—April 20, 1806, five acres; tract of five hundred French acres at same place, July 29, 1806.

Ibid., 2d Sess. 16th Cong., v. 8, doc. 110, page 4. Proposals from sixteen persons for transporting military stores from St. Louis to Council Bluffs ranged from \$3.25 to \$4 per 100 lbs.—among them one from Frederick Dent.

P. 9. Thomas S. Jesup, quartermaster-general, proposed to allow Colonel James Johnson "thirty-three and one-third per cent in addition to the usual freight, for the stores and provisions transported to the Council Bluffs"; the usual freight to Martin Cantonment.

Pp. 10, 11. Commodore John Rodgers and Gen. John Mason were agreed upon as referees with Walter Jones as umpire in place of William Wirt, attorney-general, who declined to act.

Only charges for transportation on the Missouri to be referred. The claim for detention at the mouth of the Missouri of the *Expedition*, \$13,333.33; and the *Johnson*, \$7,200, was to be referred; the award to be final.

Ibid., p. 5.



## DOCUMENTS IN THE CASE

- Section 1. Contract between war department and James Johnson
2. Mr. Johnson's case—correspondence, etc.
  3. “ “ “ depositions
  4. “ “ “ opinion of William Pinkney
  5. “ “ “ argument of Henry Clay.
  6. “ “ “ letters of Col. Atkinson
  7. Depositions on behalf of war department.
  8. Statement to referees on behalf of war department.
  9. Argument of William Wirt, attorney general.
  10. Documents of arbitrators.
  11. Award of arbitrators.
  12. Settlement under the award.

P. 3. Silas Craig was the lowest bidder, but he was unable to furnish the security required, and the quartermaster at St. Louis gave the contract to Colonel James Johnson, the next lowest.

P. 6. Contract.

P. 8. Bond signed by William Ward, John T. Johnson, Joel Johnson, Henry Johnson, as sureties,—penalty, \$50,000.

January 5, 1820, Thomas Jesup, quartermaster-general, proposed, among other things, to pay the usual freight from St. Louis to Martin Cantonment, Fort Osage, and the Council Bluffs, on the Missouri, and to allow thirty-three and one-third per cent in addition for the stores and provisions transported to Council Bluffs.

P. 9. Referees named.

P. 10. Final decision to refer to Commodore John

Rodgers, General John Mason, and William Wirt, attorney general of the United States.

P. 11. Only charge for transportation so far as it relates to the operations on the Missouri river to be referred.

It is agreed by both parties that claims for detention of the *Expedition* and *Johnson* at the mouth of the Missouri—the first for \$13,333.33, the second for \$7,200—and for detention of the *Expedition*, *Jefferson*, and *Johnson* up the Missouri, be referred.

Award of arbitrators, or a majority of them, to be final.

Mr. Wirt declined to act as umpire (in January, 1820); probably because he was attorney-general, and by agreement of the parties the arbitrators named Walter Jones in his place.

P. 12. Johnson's bill charged  $16\frac{1}{4}$  cents for freight on the three steamboats and on six keel boats from Belle Fontaine to Council Bluffs. In each instance the quartermaster-general's memorandum was "usual price,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  cents"; also fifty dollars each for three hundred officers and soldiers in the three steamboats from Belle Fontaine to Council Bluffs, as to which the quartermaster-general remarked, "fifty per cent too much."

P. 13. September 30, 1819, James Johnson writes to Richard M. Johnson, his brother and attorney, a very vigorous denunciation of the alleged attempt of the Bank of St. Louis which has undertaken to attach his boats and provisions. He says the bank has already swindled him out of \$50,000.

Col. Talbot Chambers, of the Rifle regiment, commanding at Belle Fontaine, charged that Johnson's steamboats did not furnish proper accommodations for troops; to which Johnson replied that, "The accommodation of soldiers and boatmen must of necessity be very different from that which is prepared for ladies in a ball room, or

even the silk stocking gentry of your luminous cities, not that soldiers are less meritorious than other classes of our fellow citizens; I should be the last to say, or believe so, for the soldier is his country's stay in the day and hour of danger. But the soldier expects to meet with difficulties and dangers and privations. He neither expects the silver spoon nor the silver slippers. Now, what is the fact in this case? The Expedition contained a plain, nice, level deck about 120 feet long, and it would have taken [but?] a day to have stretched the soldiers' tents on a ridge pole, to be fixed so as to form an awning; a detachment had come on from Louisville in that way, comfortably. The soldiers appeared much pleased, and so did the officers, with their situation in the cabin." The charge that the soldiers could have no exercise he said went to the general question—the practicability of this mode of traveling—to be settled between the secretary of war and Colonel Chambers. He was at a loss to know how the soldiers on shore, pulling at the cordelle, could be more safe from Indian ambuscade than men in the center of the river on a steamboat, "particularly when the mattresses could all be thrown up in a few minutes, and we were provided with extra plank, which was intended to be thrown against the hand rails above, which would form a complete fortification against Indian bullets or balls."

Johnson seems to have made one good point, namely, that while he considered that he was not bound to repack and resalt for the voyage up the Missouri the provisions which he delivered in good order, yet he was willing to furnish salt and hands and leave the question of expense to the secretary of war.

There was flat contradiction as to whether a portion of the meats was good or bad.

P. 17. The sheriff from St. Louis undertook to serve civil process on Johnson's representatives at Belle Fontaine



on the written permission of Colonel Chambers. "The sheriff was defeated by the firmness and decision of Captain Craig, and the government provisions being thus abandoned, by the orders of Colonel Chambers, were safely conveyed back to the Expedition." Johnson plausibly contended that the goods were virtually delivered, except as to those that might be found unfit when they were presented for inspection, and that no third party might interfere. He says he was threatened with force by the state authorities; but he prepared to resist under the United States flag.

P. 19. May 20, 1819. Colonel Chambers requests Johnson to forward, by keel boat, a partial supply of provisions to Martin Cantonment at once, "to save the battalion of riflemen stationed" there. This necessity, he says, was caused "by the failure of the steamboats and the uncertainty which exists of their being enabled to ascend the Missouri river . . ." May 22d Colonel Chambers says, in reply to Johnson's inquiry of the same date whether the two steamboat loads of provisions which were at Belle Fontaine would be protected from arrest by the civil authority, "when delivered in the garrison," that he was not authorized to receive them until inspected and turned over by the commissary, Major Hemstead, or he was ordered to do so in writing by General Bissell. Johnson at once replies that he is ready for inspection. Chambers insists that the guard Johnson asks for will only protect property from injury, not from the civil authority of St. Louis. In view of the actual menace, Chambers' caution seemed justified. He refused to put the property in the storehouse previous to inspection; therefore Johnson asked Major Whistler to deposit the goods as near the store as possible; but he declined on the 23d to formally recognize the offer to deposit the goods, much less to receive them. Colonel Chambers, on the 21st, wrote to General Bissell that the *Expedition*, a boat of two hundred tons, drawing

seven feet, reached St. Louis on the 13th and Belle Fontaine on the 18th, taking five days to accomplish twenty-five miles; "her machinery appears to be so feeble that it was with the utmost difficulty that she could reach this place," and the rapidity of the current could not be compared with that of the Missouri river; troops would be exposed to scorching sun by day and rain and dew by night on the open platform on the upper deck, and with no chance for exercise; the crew was inexperienced and the boat deficient in anchors and other appendages.

"There exists but little doubt that she can never reach her destination. So soon as the annexed arrangements were [completed I?] immediately proposed to Colonel Johnson, to have the provisions inspected and turned over to the commissary, in order to expedite; but, in consequence of a civil suit, which had been adjudged unfavorably to Colonel Johnson, which he determined to resist, by force, and the opinion which he entertains that he is not subject to the expense of repacking and rendering the provisions sure from becoming tainted, no progress had yet been made except the landing of a few barrels, which were immediately seized by a civil officer."

From the apparent state of the provisions it was impossible that they could be preserved one month. The few barrels weighed were deficient twenty pounds each "and the brine which I obtained from them was not only high colored, but the smell extremely offensive." He understood the civil authority at St. Louis was determined to arrest the progress of the boats unless the claims against Johnson were adjusted, and as he was equally determined to oppose, the expedition would be very much retarded.

But Colonel Chambers had no legal right to anticipate all this, and the boats were, in fact, cleared. Colonel Chambers seemed to be in collusion with the bank, as Johnson charged, though Johnson also was a great bluffer.

May 24, Johnson writes Chambers: "I am ready, at

a moments warning, to ascend either of these rivers with the boats now here in the employment of government."

July 4 Jesup writes Johnson—both being at Belle Fontaine—that his agent at Louisville had forced Captain Pickett, the quartermaster-general's assistant, to contract freight at three dollars a hundred from that place to St. Louis, whereas the regular rate from Pittsburgh to St. Louis was only a dollar and seventy-five cents.

"It will not be in my power to make you any further advances; half the sum already advanced ought to have defrayed the whole expense of the expedition both on the Missouri and Mississippi. Congress at their last session appropriated one hundred and ninety thousand dollars for transportation, viz: one hundred and forty thousand dollars for the transportation of troops and stores, and fifty thousand for the transportation of provisions; of that sum you have received already upwards of one hundred and eighty thousand dollars, and you have furnished transportation for four companies of men only, and for about three hundred and thirty tons of provisions and stores . . . The season has so far advanced that delay can be no longer tolerated."

Answering on the same date, Johnson says the three steamboats are here—at Belle Fontaine—ready and, he presumes, will proceed up the river in the morning. He whines for still more money. (There was, undoubtedly, corrupt carelessness in these advances.) He is ready to provide any amount of transportation needed on very short notice.

July 9 Johnson writes the quartermaster-general that on that day he left the *Expedition*, *Jefferson*, and *Johnson* at St. Charles, their cargoes all safe and in good plight and the boats competent to oppose the rapid current of the Missouri with entire success. Yet the *Jefferson* and *Johnson* had already been aground. He left orders for them to proceed at once to Council Bluffs, as his pilots informed him that the water was deep enough. For a report of the



committee of the house of representatives on the award, March 1, 1821, see *Military Affairs*, v. 2, p. 324.

On the 9th Johnson replies further to Jesup's strictures (p. 28), contending that his agreement with Pickett was fair and that the three steamboats took on three hundred and seventy-five tons in freight and men; when they left Belle Fontaine enough flour was left for a keel boat load. He had a boat ready to take it, except that a patroon had not returned with hands for loading from St. Louis; but Captain McGunnele saw fit to give it to other boats which he said were ready, yet on that day they were still at the mouth of the river—waiting for hands. He contends that he lost half a month in vain efforts to unload and deliver his cargoes at Belle Fontaine. August 27 Jesup advises Johnson of a large sum advanced to him by order of the president; the quartermaster-general therefore calls on Johnson "for such sums as may be necessary to enable him (Captain McGunnele) to discharge the boats which were employed in consequence of the deficiency of your arrangements"; and he asks Johnson to give a mortgage or bill of sale on the *Johnson* and the *Expedition* as further security, the bond being only \$50,000. (P. 31.)

On the 28th Johnson denies that McGunnele was compelled to employ any boats on account of deficiency in his arrangements. He was ready to give any additional security required; but the property in question was already mortgaged to the government. There follows plenty of trouble about necessary supplementary keel boats. By August 31 Captain McGunnele had heard, through a Frenchman who left Martin Cantonment on the 20th, that the *Expedition* was taking out her cargo at Ft. Osage, being unable to proceed farther "for want of depth of water." He had met the *Johnson* about thirty miles below Fort Osage. (P. 34).

Johnson undertakes to lay the foundation for further

contracting next year by advising Calhoun, secretary of war, that proper inspection be made at Louisville as early as February and then, in case of disaster, the loss should be the contractor's. This year the *Expedition* arrived at Belle Fontaine about May 17 and the inspection, resalting, and repacking took sixty days, during which time the boat would have gone a thousand miles up the river. There were only five months with good water after ice was broken. His plan was to carry all provisions in flat bottom boats and keels to the mouth of the Ohio, there loading steamboats and keels for the rest of the journey. (P. 42.)

Pp. 44-58. On the 26th of November, 1819, Johnson sent from Great Crossings, his Kentucky home, to the secretary of war, a long story of his vicissitudes and the causes of delay in arriving at St. Louis. The *Jefferson* broke her piston head below St. Louis and was delayed a short time; the *Calhoun* failed in her boiler; the *Expedition* arrived May 12, lay two and one-half days to make repairs, arriving at Belle Fontaine the 17th, the *Johnson* about the 21st, and the *Exchange* at St. Louis about the same time. It was intended that this boat should go no farther than Belle Fontaine. The *Expedition*, Johnson said, had taken a fourth more than her ordinary tonnage to Belle Fontaine, "through a current, universally admitted by navigators of that river, as difficult and rapid as any that we should encounter. The citizens generally partook of the joy, except a faction at St. Louis, composed of the friends of the poor old broken St. Louis Bank, to see a steamboat, carrying more than two hundred tons of actual cargo, ascending their waters." At Belle Fontaine he had told Colonel Chambers that the attempt of the bank to attach the property was indefensible, because he regarded it as government property, "as it was purchased by advances made to myself as contractor." He wanted Chambers to receive the cargo in keel boats direct from the *Expedition*,

the inspection to be at Johnson's risk; but Chambers declined. Johnson puffs Col. Atkinson (p. 50) liberally, but ineffectually, and then he accuses him, as well as Jesup, Chamberlain, and Captain McGunnege, of conspiring against himself. The *Expedition*, *Jefferson*, and *Johnson* all received their cargoes "composed of provisions, munitions of war, and military stores, and arrived at Belle Fontaine about the second of July, where a quantity of quartermaster's and hospital stores were put on board, and the baggage belonging to officers and soldiers." They set sail July 3. A few days before they set out Johnson found that he must have some more money to buy fuel; but Jesup refused the requested advance. August 30 Uriel Sebree sent word that, though one of Johnson's keel boats had arrived and was alongside the *Jefferson*, Captain Bliss, the commanding officer on board, did not think that his instructions permitted him to unload on Johnson's keel boat. The hands had been persuaded that they would not get paid and were not inclined to go on with Johnson's keel boats.

P. 56. October 12, Johnson says: "Major Sebree, with the last article from on board the steamboat *Expedition* and part from the steamboat *Johnson*, was a hundred miles above Martin's Camp with my keel boats, going on well."

On the 16th Captain Craig had received every pound of cargo from the *Johnson* on Johnson's keel boats, and was going in person to Council Bluffs with all possible dispatch. Then Johnson drops into self-praise:

"Long before this day (Nov. 26) every pound of provisions is at headquarters; this cargo was conveyed by my keel boats, which boats returned from the Council Bluffs, after having discharged their cargoes. The two last keel boats sent from Belle Fontaine may not have reached headquarters, but they must be near at hand. Thus, is this great concern closed, and I have conveyed from Belle



Fontaine, up the two rivers, nine hundred and eighty-seven tons, and could have conveyed much more if desired."

(This was vain boasting considering that the great power of the government had advanced him extravagant remuneration and over \$76,000 in excess; and that for many years trappers and traders had been successfully freighting in keel boats far beyond Council Bluffs.)

"... It was generally feared that it was impracticable. It was admitted by all, except a squad at St. Louis, to be a most high-minded attempt to benefit the west in particular; and that squad was composed of those who were in the British interest, as I believe. But, as respected the success of the steamboats, this was thought out of the question: sir, may I be believed that I find very few indeed but what believed the same thing? Louisville, Cincinnati, and the whole country, contained the same sentiment. All this, I confess, did not change my belief that success was ours; and we have certainly succeeded as far as a trial could have been obtained. I can put the provisions as high up as the government requires next year. And, if I shall have your confidence and support, the world shall be deceived as to the fact of success, and that too in steamboats in part, and keel boats the balance. Many who own steamboats now believe in its practicability. I have broken the way at immense expense and risque."

Halderman, "the great freighter", declined his offer of six cents a pound to carry goods to Martin. Cantonment last fall, now he is apparently freighting half as far again for five and one-half cents.

P. 59. May 20, Johnson was hoping at Belle Fontaine that the government boat commanded by Major Long would arrive and that Jesup and Colonel Atkinson would come on her. In another place he says their arrival would be his day of jubilee; but it was only a frost.

P. 60. A sketch of General Jesup from the *Georgetown Patriot*. He entered the army in 1808 as an ensign or lieutenant; is now about thirty years old; was in the

battles of Niagara, Chippeway, etc., in which he was severely wounded, having lost two fingers from his right hand. The objects of the expedition were "to ascertain the point where the Rocky mountains are intersected with the 49th degree of latitude, which forms the western [northern] boundary between the possessions of Great Britain and the United States; to inquire into the trading capacity and genius of the various tribes through which they may pass; and, finally, to investigate whatever may be novel or interesting in the geology, botany, mineralogy and natural history of those yet unknown regions."

Johnson adduced a great mass of testimony to show that navigation on the Missouri was four or five times as difficult as on the Mississippi. Major Stephen H. Long (p. 73) said that, at a moderate stage, the velocity of the Ohio from Louisville was three miles and a quarter an hour; of the Mississippi, between the Ohio and the Missouri, four and a half miles; of the Missouri to Council Bluffs, during the navigable season, five and a quarter miles. Select French crews had voyaged from St. Louis to Council Bluffs in forty-five or fifty days. The journey required great skill in hands.

P. 81. John O'Fallon testified that for nearly the last two years he had been "actively employed in transporting merchandise, etc., for the troops up the river Missouri, and the last year as high up as the Council Bluffs; which place I have once visited in that time . . . Owing to the great and extraordinary drought that prevailed, not only in the western country, but, I believe, throughout the United States, I was informed by the oldest traders residing on the Missouri, that the river was lower, and its navigation worse than they ever knew it before." He had always doubted that any steamboat could navigate the Missouri with profit or safety; and Major Long concurred with him "after his arrival near the Council Bluffs." O'Fallon eulogized Major

Sebree, Johnson's agent, and Captain Craig, commander of the *Expedition*, for competency. He noticed that one of Halderman's boats, employed by the quartermaster at St. Louis, when it arrived at Council Bluffs from the *Jefferson*, had hardly twenty tons; while on the Mississippi or Ohio it would carry thirty tons. "Personally appeared John O'Fallon and made oath, On the Holy Evangelists of Almighty God", etc., was the form of oath in O'Fallon's deposition.

Christopher Crow, "clerk and steersman to the steam-boat *Expedition*, from Louisville until she stopped at Cow Island, in the Missouri", testified to the good condition of the *Expedition* and *Johnson* on their arrival at Belle Fontaine, and that repairs would not have detained them more than forty-eight hours. These boats failed to reach Council Bluffs "on account of the low water and nothing else." Atkinson issued his order that the *Expedition* should stop and the provisions be taken by keel boats, on account of the low state of the water. (P. 88)

Andrew Johnson said, (p. 95) that it was necessary to lie by at night on the Missouri, but not on the Mississippi. It was necessary to clear the boiler of mud every two or three days. It takes about five days to go from Cow Island to Council Bluffs. A boat would last only half as long on the Missouri as on other streams. The *Johnson's* capacity was ninety tons; the *Expedition* carried two hundred and twenty-five tons and the *Jefferson* three hundred, to St. Louis. By a round trip on the Mississippi that season the *Jefferson* would have made, clear, \$20,000; the *Expedition*, \$22,000; and the *Johnson*, \$10,000.

James Taylor (p. 97) testified that the distance from the mouth of the Missouri to Council Bluffs was upwards of seven hundred and fifty miles. A. Johnson, agent for the contractor at St. Louis, dilates (p. 108) on the allegation that the army officers criticized the government for risking



too much on Johnson's credit, alleging that he had drawn \$180,000 more than he could account for and that Halderman, who at first wanted to engage to furnish him with keel boats, afterward refused and was employed by Captain McGunnegle, representing the government, to supply them.

P. 110. August 29, 1820 [1819], Captain Bliss, commanding the Sixth infantry, ordered that "in consequence of the stoppage and final failure of the steamboat *Thomas Jefferson*, and the master and agent of the same having, on the 10th of July, declined, to the commanding officer, to navigate the same to Council Bluffs, the place of its destination, . . . by the department order of the 3d of July last, Lieutenant Brown, quartermaster Sixth infantry, will immediately demand and receive from the master and agent of the said boat the provisions, stores and munitions of war, and all the property on board of it belonging to the United States, or the troops thereof, preparatory to its being loaded into keel boats, provided for that purpose by the quartermaster-general's department"; to which Sebree, the agent, presumptuously refused to accede, insisting on retaining forty tons to put on Colonel Johnson's keel boat, "now with said steam boat."

P. 112. Sebree states that he left Belle Fontaine July 5, on board the *Thomas Jefferson*, and proceeded to a point forty miles below Franklin,<sup>11</sup> "which is about two hundred miles from the mouth of the river; the water then became so low that it was impossible for her to proceed

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<sup>11</sup> According to Kansas Historical Collections, v. 8, p. 439, note, this point was opposite the mouth of the Osage river; but that is about double the distance of Major Sebree's estimate. The same writer says, also, that the *Jefferson* was sunk here by a snag, but there is no mention of such an occurrence by Major Sebree and none in the comprehensive report of the investigation of the expedition. There is much misstatement in the brief account of the expedition given by Houck's *History of Missouri*, v. 3, p. 199.

further up the river." Without delay he advised James Johnson of the impossibility of going farther with the *Jefferson*, and Johnson replied that with a few days to provide hands he could furnish keel boats to take all the loading of the *Jefferson*, that one boat was sent at once, and another would start in a few days. But McGunnele informed Johnson that unless he could start boats on Monday (it was then Saturday) the government would start its own boats. Sebree put three hundred and thirteen barrels of flour on Johnson's fifty ton boat. The rest went by government boats, sent by McGunnele; and on account of orders given the officer commanding the detachment (Captain Bliss), "it was with some difficulty I obtained even that."

Why, being cognizant of Johnson's overdraft, did not the officers get all they could out of him? seems a pertinent but not answerable query.

Ibid. Thomas Hempstead testified that, from the rise in the spring to August 1st, the Missouri would afford ten to thirty feet of water and the current three and a half to seven miles an hour.

P. 113. John Harris testified that boats the size of the *Johnson* carried ninety tons up and down the Mississippi and the Ohio; that the *Expedition* brought two hundred and twenty-five tons, and the *Jefferson* two hundred tons to St. Louis; but it would not answer to load them more than half that amount for the Missouri. The *Expedition* arrived at St. Louis May 12, and the *Johnson* May 17; they were detained near Belle Fontaine till July 5, but were ready with their crews to start on from the 17th of May, and in consequence of detention were prevented from reaching Council Bluffs—which is probably correct as to lateness of starting, though this explanation of the responsibility for it is at least doubtful. "The difficulties of the river increase very much from Cow Island . . ."

P. 116. George Colefax testified that the *Jefferson* and the *Expedition* were entirely new for the Council Bluffs voyage and were of the first class. The damage to the *Expedition* from wear and tear in going to Cow Island was at least thirty per cent. The *Johnson* was a very fast boat.

Six officers on board the *Expedition* gave Captain Craig and his outfit bright encomiums. Where there was sufficient depth of water he could out-run the keel boats and cut and load his own wood. Date lines designated Martin Cantonment as "Camp Martin, Cow Island, on the Missouri river"—about ten miles above the site subsequently occupied by the city of Leavenworth.

P. 118. Smith Calvert went on the *Johnson* in May, 1819, from Louisville to Belle Fontaine. Both the *Johnson* and the *Expedition* were fine boats and were ready to proceed at any time after arrival. He saw Colonel Atkinson's troops go by Colonel Johnson's warehouse at the mouth of the Missouri in keel boats after he had fallen back there from Belle Fontaine. St. Louis was fifteen to eighteen miles below the mouth of the Missouri.

P. 128. Captain James McGunnege testified that Gen. Jesup arrived at St. Louis about May twenty-eighth, Col. Atkinson June first, and the Sixth regiment at Belle Fontaine about June fifth. Shortly after the arrival of the troops he heard Col. Atkinson say that his movement was entirely depending upon the steamboats and supplies on board which would not be ready to move for ten or fifteen days; and, in the meantime, he would experiment with the application of wheel power to propel the keel boats. This work was commenced by the troops about eight or ten days after their arrival and was not completed until one or two days after the steamboats reached Belle Fontaine from the mouth of Wood river. He thought it was about the twenty-seventh of June that the *Expedition* and *Johnson*



were reported to be in readiness to sail from the mouth of Wood river to Belle Fontaine. The troops were employed in making wheels for the keel boats until a very few days before starting; "but this labor was never considered indispensable to the movement." He had frequently heard Col. Atkinson say that he could have moved within ten days after the infantry arrived but for the detention on account of boats and supplies. Andrew Johnson promised him that the *Johnson* would be sent below to get the troops and stores from the *Jefferson*.

P. 125. H. J. Offutt, master of the *Jefferson*, tells a story of the difficulties of the Missouri on account of sand which cuts machinery, the many bars, shifting channels, planters—large trees fast in the sand—and the extreme rapid current. A double set of hands was required for keel boats. The crew of the *Jefferson* for a year cost \$15,000; rigging and other outfits, \$8,000; tonnage, 22,281.95; the vessel was inferior to none on the western waters; and her engine was one of the best and most powerful on western waters. It propels her with full cargo—222 tons—on the Mississippi at all times, but can ascend the Missouri only with little more than half of full tonnage. A steamboat will last only four years on the Missouri; nearly double that time on the Mississippi. Anchors get caught in logs and can't be got loose and so are lost. The tonnage of the *Expedition* was little more than the *Jefferson's*; the *Johnson's* was a hundred tons, and she was one of the fastest boats on the Mississippi river.

P. 130. Colonel Talbot Chambers testified that during the last summer (1819) one keel boat, manned by a detachment of infantry under Captain Livingston, was sunk near Grand river; and another, loaded with munitions of war, about sixty miles below the Council Bluffs. Nothing of the cargoes of consequence was saved. In July the river was uncommonly high; in the fall proportionately low. At

Fort Osage Captain Craig lost confidence and wanted to send the cargo by keel boats, but was overruled. There were three companies of riflemen—ninety men in each—at Cantonment Martin.

P. 132. Capt. Craig says the *Expedition* arrived at St. Louis May twelfth or thirteenth, where they were detained, with their crews—at Belle Fontaine—until July fifth, and on that account prevented from reaching Council Bluffs with their loads, and probably returning. The *Johnson* could carry about ninety tons; the *Expedition*, two hundred and twenty-five; the *Jefferson*, two hundred, to St. Louis, but only half that on the Missouri river.

P. 133. William Pinkney's "letter and opinion", submitted to the arbitrators, dated Washington, March 29, 1820, makes, pretty clearly, the point that the goods should pass an authorized inspection at St. Louis, and there Johnson's responsibility ended, except as to their transportation. Repacking and resalting were extraneous. If detained for any cause but his own negligence the contractor must be fully compensated.

Pp. 140-157. Henry Clay's argument, dated Washington, March 28, 1820, summarized the objects of the government of the United States: to establish a military post at the mouth of the Yellowstone river, the post to be "one of a line and part of a system whose object was a monopoly of the rich fur trade of the northwest, the suppression of British influence on the numerous and warlike Indian tribes who inhabit or hunt in those regions, and the communication of a just dread amongst them of the power and resources of the United States." Another object was exploration, "and particularly to determine if the benefits which the genius of Fulton has conferred upon our country and upon the world, in the improvement of navigation, could be realized on that great river. The conception of this daring enterprise was grand and worthy of the distin-

guished individuals who preside over the department of war and the quartermaster's department, to whom the merit of it is believed to belong."

The great compromiser (this was the very year in which he won that vain title) followed this preliminary dish of taffy with the regular course of his argument. "Success," he contended, "required adequate means not measured out upon calculating parsimony, but liberally supplied, on a scale proportionate to the magnitude of the undertaking." Johnson was to furnish at least two steamboats calculated to navigate the Mississippi "and its waters." Johnson complied with conditions "amply commensurate", at the mouth of the Missouri, "long before the arrival of Col. Atkinson with his regiment." The *Expedition* arrived at St. Louis May 12th; the *Johnson*, on the 17th; the *Jefferson*, "shortly after." Repairs necessary to continue the journey required not over forty-eight hours. The faults were (1) Col. Chambers' failure to coöperate in inspection; (2) the demand for resalting and repacking; (3) non-arrival of Colonel Atkinson and Gen. Jesup; (4) unavoidable delay "incident to the operation."

It was nearly a month after the arrival of the steamboats when Atkinson and his regiment and Jesup, with definite authority, came. "It would be monstrous to apply any huckstering principles to such a contract." It required only five days more to go from St. Louis to Cow Island than from Cow Island to Council Bluffs. In July and August of this year the quartermaster contracted for the transportation of provisions, etc., at five and one-half cents per pound on keel boats from Belle Fontaine to Council Bluffs; but they were only half loaded. He paid by capacity or tonnage of the boats, so that the real rate was eleven cents. Mr. Clay argued plausibly for an extra-contractual bonus for pioneer experiment. "In the meantime the government is entitled to the everlasting gratitude



of posterity for having demonstrated the interesting fact that the Missouri is navigable by steamboats . . . . That the whole of the voyage was not performed is not the fault of James Johnson. The non-performance of it proceeded from causes beyond his control. The stage of the water was such that he could make no further progress, and the prosecution of it was suspended by order of the officer of the government";—which more than smacks of specious pettifogging. He might better have contended, frankly, that the United States ought to foot almost any bill, regardless of contractual limitations, treating the undertaking as an extra-contractual enterprise. But he wished to "catch 'em coming and going". Johnson, he insisted, was excused from executing his contract by act of God and was also entitled to detention damages as if the order to stop on account of low water was the fault of the other party. Good evidence was deduced that his own crew insisted that they could go no farther. "It is conceived that so much of the whole period of detention up the Missouri as, in navigable states of the river, would have been sufficient to complete the voyage, should be deducted, and the compensation for detention up the river to that extent reduced, in consideration of the admission of the charge for full freight."

The contract contained the liberal clause, "such reasonable and further allowance"—beyond the usual compensation—"as may be equitable and just; provided, that if, in the arrangements and operations of the government, the said steamboats should be detained in their destination, from the want of concentration of the articles, etc. to be transported, or otherwise, and not imputable to the negligence of the said James Johnson". "Otherwise" contemplated "the arrangements and operations of the government", not the act of God. Moreover, all risks were discounted in the unprecedented rate. Clay, how-

ever, assumed that the detention at the mouth of the Missouri was not imputable to the fault or negligence of Johnson, and that but for it "the voyage might unquestionably have been completed." If this is true, then the low water catastrophe might be imputed to the government. "The testimony shows that, in ordinary seasons, and but for the unexampled low state of the river, the voyage might have been completed". This was not relevant; because Johnson ran that risk himself.

Colonel Atkinson's letters (pp. 159-171) illuminate the anti-Johnson side of the controversy. Though he arrived at St. Louis June first, he writes under date of June seventh. He says it will probably take a fortnight to finish inspecting the provisions intended for the supplies on the Missouri. Two of Johnson's boats arrived "a few days before me". The *Jefferson* was lying one hundred and fifty miles below, in consequence of a part of her machinery having given way. In three or four days he will send off Colonel Chambers from Belle Fontaine, with two hundred and seventy men of his regiment, in four transport boats brought from Pittsburg, to join the part of the regiment at Cantonment Martin, "with instructions to be ready to ascend with my regiment on its arrival there with steamboats. The rifle regiment will be transported in keel boats and my own in the four steamboats"—*Expedition, Jefferson, Johnson, Calhoun*—"attended by four keel boats . . . I have not the least doubt of the practicability of navigating the Missouri with steam power, notwithstanding the almost universal opinion to the contrary. My regiment and the detachment of the Fifth arrived this morning" [seventh], "and will probably reach Belle Fontaine today . . . I do not think that we can get off sooner than a fortnight. Colonel Johnson will, most probably, not be ready earlier . . . The steamboat under care of Major Long" (*Western Engineer*) "is a short distance below and will probably arrive to-

day . . . The detachment of the Fifth regiment, under Captain Pelham, is at Belle Fontaine. The part of it intended for the rifle regiment will be immediately transferred, and the remainder, with the detachment that accompanied my regiment, ordered up the Missouri, to join the Fifth."

June 19. He is sorry that Johnson's steamboats have not all arrived. The *Calhoun* has not been heard from,<sup>s</sup> but he will go in six or seven days "with the three steamboats and four of our keels". The troops are ready but it will require several days to reload the steamboats. Only a part of the provisions necessary had arrived. He will certainly establish himself at Council Bluffs this season and very possibly carry the Rifle regiment to the Mandan villages. He will not risk too much nor leave anything undone that can be prudently accomplished. Long's "exploring steamboat" will start tomorrow—June 20.

St. Charles, July 11. After exerting himself for more than a month he was not able to get from Johnson sufficient provisions to justify the movement until the second of July. Immediately on receipt of provisions he ordered the troops (the Sixth regiment) to embark, four companies on the three steamboats and four on keels started on the fourth and fifth. The keels made fine progress. Two steamers went aground the first day and were got off with much difficulty; they all reached St. Charles on the eighth. On the 10th the *Jefferson* was again delayed by broken machinery. He doubts that she will reach Council Bluffs, but thinks the others will. The *Johnson* is still short of necessary provisions. He regretted that anything relating to transportation connected with the expedition had been delegated to other hands—than the quartermaster-general's.

Franklin, July 30. Four companies of the Sixth regiment in keels and one company and a half in the *Expedition* arrived on the twenty-second. The other two steam-



boats were sixty miles below. Those in keels went on, after a day to dry baggage. The *Expedition* was delayed till to-day to repair machinery. Doubts that either of the steamboats will reach their destination. The keels behind, with the residue of provisions, will insure reaching Council Bluffs in good season. He is waiting for the *Johnson*.

Franklin, August 13. Colonel Chambers is now at Fort Osage, with a detachment of his regiment and four companies of the Sixth regiment. Three days ago the *Expedition*, with one company and a half, was progressing fifty miles below Fort Osage. The *Johnson*, with a company, was progressing forty-five miles above Franklin, on the eleventh. He was advised by express two days ago that the *Jefferson*, with one company and a half on board, was aground forty miles below. The captain of the boat had notified the commanding officer of the troops that he could proceed no farther. Agreeable to special instructions, left the commanding officer, he at once sent to St. Louis for keel boats to receive the *Jefferson's* cargo. A keel boat was also sent from Franklin this day to the *Jefferson*, for articles needed above for immediate use. The assistant deputy quartermaster-general had been advised to hold the boats in readiness "to meet any failure of the steamboats".

Having arranged for forwarding the *Jefferson's* cargo, Colonel Atkinson intended to set out that day to join the *Johnson* at Fort Osage "and from thence proceed in her to the Cantonment above". His arrangements would get the cargo up in good season if both the other boats failed. "The tardiness of the *Jefferson* would have authorized me to have discharged her two or three weeks ago, which would have been so much time saved. But, knowing as I did, that Colonel Johnson had drawn largely on account of transportation, I thought it most prudent, as I had yet time on my hands, to wait till a failure was acknowledged on the part of the boat, that he might not have the slightest

reason to say that any interference on the part of the commanding officer of the expedition caused to him a loss. Indeed, I have been careful to avoid giving him the smallest clue by which he could claim indemnity from government for losses which he must certainly sustain in his contract for transportation." Colonel Atkinson declares, now, that Colonel Johnson is greatly deficient in supplies furnished and (p. 164) gives specific figures.

At Chariton, August 14. Advises the use of keel boats only, for future transportation, and not to be taken out of the hands of the quartermaster-general's department. Thinks he would fail in his object next year if supplies should be entrusted to Johnson. "The meat part of the ration could be abundantly and cheaply supplied in the neighborhood of Franklin. Fine pork could be bought at two dollars and a half a hundred, and beef at the same price." Colonel Atkinson left that day to join the *Johnson* at Fort Osage and take passage on her for Martin Cantonment.

Fort Osage, August 25. Arrived on the 23d. The detachment of the Rifle regiment and five companies of the Sixth regiment moved on that day, under Colonel Chambers, on the *Expedition* and keel boats, for Martin Cantonment.

Martin Cantonment, September 6. Arrived on the 31st ultimo. Colonel Chambers with the detachment of riflemen and five companies of the Sixth regiment, got there, with the *Expedition*, on the twenty-ninth.

"The steamboat Expedition has halted here, it being deemed impracticable, in consequence of the lowness of the river, to get her to the Council Bluffs. The Johnson will probably be able to reach that point, as her draught of water is much lighter. The cargo of the Expedition has been reshipped in our transport boats and a keel employed by Colonel Johnson's agent, and, should the Johnson fail, I have ample means within my control to have her cargo

taken up in good season. The Rifle regiment and the five companies of the Sixth embark today at one o'clock for the Council Bluffs. We shall, no doubt, make the march in twenty days. The infantry which were on board the steamboat *Jefferson* are charged with the safe conduct of the keels that received her cargo, and may be expected to join us above by the 15th proximo; those on board the *Johnson* will be up sooner; therefore, it may be safely calculated, that the principal part of the troops will be established at the Council Bluffs by the first of October, and the residue by the 20th, together with all our ordnance, munitions, and provisions for twelve months."

Colonel Atkinson has requested Major O'Fallon, Indian agent, to inhibit all trade with the Pawnee till proper restitution is made for depredations against Major Biddle and party while on a tour through the Kansas country.

Camp Missouri, near the Council Bluffs, October 3, 1819. Arrived "with the Rifle regiment and five and a half companies of the Sixth, at a point a few miles below this, early on the morning of the 29th ult., where we remained till yesterday morning to examine the neighboring country for the purpose of selecting a position to canton the troops. Having fixed on this place (an extensive rich bottom, covered with suitable timber for huts, situated a mile above the Council Bluffs) we reached it yesterday evening. Tomorrow we shall commence hutting and probably cover ourselves in five weeks." Light Company A and part of B had left the steamboat *Jefferson* in keels, and were, on the 7th ult., eighty miles below Fort Osage. "They may be expected to reach this by the 20th instant, together with the cargo of the *Jefferson* escorted by Captain Bliss's command. Battalion company H is also behind. It was on board the *Johnson*, which broke part of her machinery thirty miles above Fort Osage. Keel boats were discharged from here some days ago and sent down to her; therefore







SNAGS (SUNKEN TREES) ON THE MISSOURI—From Portfolio of Maximilian Prince of Wied

the cargo and the company will no doubt be up in all this month." The colonel expects that a light boat will return to St. Louis a few days hence when he will give a detailed account. In the meantime he sends this letter by precarious means.

Pp. 169-171. Camp Missouri, October 19, 1819. Has received a communication from Calhoun, secretary of war, dated August 18, which disclosed that his movements, up to July 11, were approved. The three steamboats all failed;—one below Franklin; another, near the mouth of the Kansas river, "in the wilderness"; and the third at Cantonment Martin. One keel boat, with troops and provisions from the *Jefferson*, arrived on the 12th of October, another is near at hand. A third may be expected in four days, and the fourth, about the same time. The *Expedition's* cargo has been brought up, and the boats sent for the *Johnson's* should arrive by the end of the month. Captain Bliss has lately come up in a keel from the *Jefferson* and gives information that all the boats with supplies will come through, except one that left Belle Fontaine September 15 with flour, vinegar, etc. On account of deficiency in meat, "an article the contractor fell far short in", Colonel Atkinson had beef cattle contracted for and driven to this place. Upwards of two hundred head had arrived which would make the supply ample. A keel boat from the *Jefferson*, "with such articles of the quartermaster's and ordnance stores as we should most want in making our first establishment", struck a snag about ten days ago near the mouth of the Platte, "whilst running under easy sail, in the middle of the river." It passed through her bow; and she immediately filled and sank in twelve feet of water. No lives were lost. Her crew abandoned her two days after. Colonel Atkinson at once sent Lieutenant Keeler, acting ordnance officer, well supplied with spare anchors, cable, etc., and a



strong crew of soldiers, to try to raise the boat or as many of her articles as possible.

Councils had been held with the Kansas, Oto and Missouri, Iowa, Grand Pawnee, Pawnee Loup, Pawnee Republic and Maha tribes; Colonel Atkinson attended councils with the last four named. The chiefs were invited to sit and eat with them. The agent, Major O'Fallon, had exhibited much talent in executing his duties. The Pawnee Republicans had returned the property stolen from Biddle. Barracks were up as high as the roofs "which will soon be put on". Boards for covering, floors, &c., are in a state of forwardness. Troops will be comfortably quartered next month.

"The barracks are laid out as well for defense as for accommodation. They form a square, each curtain presenting a front of five hundred and twenty feet, made of heavy logs, the wall about sixteen feet high and the whole of the roofs sloping to the interior. In the center of each curtain there is a projection twenty feet, its width twenty with a heavy ten foot gate in the front. These projections will be pierced with three embrasures for cannon, two raking the curtain each way from the center, and the other through the gate to the front. The upper part of the projection will have a second floor and still project over the lower part to afford loops to fire down through. It will be raised to barbet[te] height and will answer for cannon and musketry. The barrack rooms, the exterior of which form the curtains, are twenty feet by twenty and will be pierced with loop holes for small arms. When completed, no force will be able to carry the work without the aid of cannon. As soon as the engineer, Lieut. Talcott, arrives, who took passage in the *Johnson*, you shall be furnished with a plan of the work and a topographical survey of the ground, the river, and the adjacent country."

Hardhart, an Indian chief, had led the colonel to believe that an excellent road might be made with but little trouble from hence, on the north side of the river, across to Chariton, a distance of one hundred and eighty or

two hundred miles. He would send an officer in four or five days, with a party of six or eight soldiers, to mark out a road by the nearest route. Pack horses and Hardhart as guide would accompany them. The road would afford easy communication to the post office at Chariton which might be kept up once a month and oftener if necessary by expresses "and which will be put in practice." Colonel Atkinson would return to St. Louis as soon as troops and boats arrived from below, "for the purpose of attending to the arrangements necessary for the completion of the expedition next season". Troops in excellent health and all well disposed to do duty.

P. 238. March 27, 1819, Secretary Calhoun orders Jesup to St. Louis with full discretionary powers in discharge of the duties of his office as to the important movements on the Mississippi and Missouri.

Ibid. The secretary of war offered Johnson \$160,000 for all transportation on both rivers. His whole outfit, including price of boats and their expenses, did not exceed \$190,000. He has his three steamboats left which, admitting that they are depreciated in value, are now worth \$70,000.

\$160,000, offered by secy. of war	
70,000, present value of boats	
<hr/>	

230,000	
190,000	Outfit and Expenses
<hr/>	

40,000, sum cleared in less than  
one year.

H. M. Brackenridge ascended from St. Louis to Fort Osage in twenty-five days; from Fort Osage to Council Bluffs in eighteen days—seven days less for the upper than for the lower part.

Pp. 242-256, Jesup's brief or statement to the referees.

“ . . . It had been previously proven by a voyage to Chariton, performed by that very Independence, which, by the testimony of Captain O’Fallon, had been towed by the Expedition over the Falls of [the] Ohio, that the Missouri was well adapted to steamboat navigation . . . When the Expedition was unable to progress and was compelled to fall back to her anchoring ground, the Independence passed up the Missouri at the rate of one and a half knots an hour. This one fact is worth more in the investigation than volumes of vague opinion. It was never contemplated that the Expedition should wait the arrival of the Sixth regiment, but the plan was for the Rifle regiment to move whenever the depot of 480,000 rations, which Colonel Johnson, as subsistence contractor, had been required to establish, should be completed.”

Jesup continues: There were officers of every department at St. Louis: General Bissell, senior in rank to Jesup, and Colonel Atkinson commanded. Captain McGunneagle, one of the most efficient officers of the army, was at the head of the quartermaster’s department; and if the contract had not been made void by Johnson’s own statement, the expedition might have progressed without either Colonel Atkinson or the quartermaster-general. The visit of the latter to St. Louis was not so much to direct operations as to provide for any failure.

When offered, it was known to the officers of the government that the provisions were deficient in quantity if not in quality. Johnson was prevented from delivering goods by difficulty with the civil authority. It was his original purpose not to comply with his contract because it would be against his interest to do so. If Johnson had complied so that the start could have been made in April instead of July the plan would have been accomplished during that season. No steamboats were navigating the Missouri at the time the contract was made, so keel boat rates must have been meant as the ordinary rates. O’Fallon was sutler to the troops at Council Bluffs when he testified



and so was an interested witness. He received five and a half cents as an employe of the quartermaster's department to transport provisions and stores to the Council Bluffs. Now he thinks Johnson should get eighteen to twenty cents. Many witnesses for Johnson were interested.

P. 258. Attorney General Wirt riddles the claim and especially as to the patriotism play. The award of the arbitrators (pp. 278-288) is very specious pleading for Johnson.

Settlement, pp. 290-292, No. 12.

Allowed for transportation of 102 troops at \$50

“ “ “ “ 86 “ “ “

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Allowed all he asked which overpaid him \$76,372.65.

Allowed for transportation of supplies on the *Expedition, Jefferson and Johnson* from the mouth of the Missouri to Council Bluffs at the rate of  $16\frac{1}{4}$  cents a pound, and for transportation on the keel boats at the same price. The arbitrators allowed for all the goods transported by the government keel boats, contending that they infringed on Johnson's rights, amount \$14,969.28. Allowed for detention above and below, \$47,149.52.

There was either great fatality or a great deal of fooling about Johnson's enterprise. On the twenty-fifth of July, 1820, it was announced in *Nile's Register*—v. 18, p. 360—that the Calhoun left St. Louis about the first of June to ascend the Mississippi as far as the falls of St. Anthony—the first expedition of its kind ever attempted. And yet this picked vessel had not been able to reach St. Louis a year before undertaking this formidable trial trip.

The same journal, volume 15, page 268, notes that “the new steamboat, Johnson, built by Colonel Johnson of Kentucky, passed Shawneetown October 1 (1818). It was “intended as a regular trader from Kentucky on the

Mississippi and the Missouri, as far up as the Yellow Stone river." Shawneetown is situated on the Ohio river, in southeastern Illinois.

Ibid., v. 19, p. 47. "The steam boat Expedition, in the service of the United States and belonging to Col. James Johnson, lately arrived at the Council Bluffs on the Missouri, with a large cargo in fine order." The date of this item, September 16, 1820, indicates that Johnson's "pull" with the government had not been weakened by the damaging showing of the military officers and the criticisms in congress.

## ORIGIN OF OLATHA, NEBRASKA

BY CICERO L. BRISTOL

In the fall of 1856 we went to Salt creek, via Weeping Water, reaching that stream several miles below where Lincoln now is, and followed up to Mr. Etherton's (some two and a half miles below the present Roca) and on to Mr. John D. Prey's large two-story log house. It was on this trip that we located our claims and the town site of Olatha.

We stayed about two weeks and returned eastward to spend the winter a few miles below Nebraska City, where there was a settlement of Wisconsin people. During the following winter we heard that the legislature had removed the capital from Omaha to Salt creek; the exact location we could not determine. But we decided to make a trip at once in order to save our claims. The snow was deep and was covered with glare ice thick enough to hold one for about two steps and let him down the third. All we had to guide us was the knowledge that Salt creek would stop us if we did not get too far south.

We put long sharp spikes in the heels of our boots to prevent slipping. Each of us drew a hand-sled loaded with food, bedding, shovels, axes, guns, ammunition, etc. The party consisted of J. L. Davison, J. V. Weeks, J. S. Goodwin, and C. L. Bristol. The ice extended back from the Missouri river only fifteen or twenty miles, but the snow was deep all the way. The first night out a fierce blizzard started, and it was very cold. We faced the fearful storm until the night before we reached Salt creek. We were five days on the trip and came very near perishing.



In the spring, Marmaduke M. Shelley of Mississippi, who was hired by the government, surveyed the land in Clay county.<sup>1</sup> The county seat of Clay county was Clayton, situated in the extreme southwest corner of the county. I was there canvassing for the office of county commissioner, and I found three or four houses. A county organization was claimed, and there was a county judge and sheriff whose names I do not remember.

At the second election (I think in 1858) James S. Goodwin was elected county commissioner by a majority of nine votes over myself. At the same election Rev. Joel Mason, W. W. Dunham's brother-in-law, was elected county judge by a small majority, only three as I remember it. He did not move to Clayton, but went down there occasionally. He was a native of Tennessee, but a strong republican; a man of almost gigantic stature and a tremendous worker. The first season he broke up eighty acres of sod, planted it to corn and harvested the crop without any assistance whatever. All this time he preached regularly and conducted a Sunday school and held prayer meetings each week. His farm was on the west side of Salt creek, below W. W. Dunham's place. He lived, however, on the east side with the Hiltons while I remained in the neighborhood.

John Greenleaf Hilton, senior, was the father of Judge Hilton of Cincinnati, Ohio, a democratic politician known at that time all over the country. Mr. Hilton was a widower and lived at the home of his son Charles. Mrs. Mason and Mrs. W. W. Dunham were his daughters. The two Hiltons and Mr. Dunham were democrats. All were deeply religious, with the possible exception of Charles and his wife. A

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<sup>1</sup> According to the township plats on file in the office of the commissioner of public lands and buildings, Richard Taylor and Thomas O'Neal were the contractors, and M. M. Marmaduke was their compass man. The surveying was begun July 13. 1857.—Ed.

regular debating society was organized and held regular meetings at the Hilton residence. Mr. Hilton, senior, although aged and somewhat decrepit, was mentally bright and a fine speaker. He and Mason were the leading debaters, but others, including myself, regularly took part.

Marmaduke M. Shelley with my assistance surveyed into town lots forty acres of Olatha town site. The organizers of Olatha town site company were Jonathan L. Davison, Joseph V. Weeks, James S. Goodwin, John G. Haskins, and Cicero L. Bristol. The town site was located about three-quarters of a mile west of the ford across Salt creek. The ford was a few yards north of the spot where the present bridge at Roca is located. The Olatha quarries were only a few rods below this ford. Jonathan L. Davison and Joseph Van Renssellear Weeks each had a house on the town site. The Weeks family consisted of Mr. Weeks, Mrs. Weeks, three daughters and a son. Mr. and Mrs. Weeks were people of high character and unusual intelligence. The eldest daughter, Mary J., afterward became my wife.

Among the few people in the neighborhood I remember the following, besides those already mentioned: A Mr. Woodruff and his son Charles from Ohio; a man named Jones and his son (a sailor) from Connecticut, and the Hiltons. All but the latter lived with the Etherton family. Mr. Woodruff and his son spent a year and a half drilling for coal which cropped out within two hundred yards of Etherton's house. The Ethertons were from Kentucky. They were the first settlers on Salt creek, next to the Preys. The family consisted of husband and wife, a son and daughter. They had a comfortable house and a very good blacksmith shop, and Mr. Etherton did blacksmithing for the settlers all along the creek. Neither husband nor wife could read or write, but they were deeply religious, and Mrs. Etherton found a tutor and learned to read the Testament. She said that was all the education she wanted.

Living near Olatha was another family by the name of Beach, including two little sons. They were unusually intelligent people. Mrs. Beach was a musician and a poet whose productions were published in eastern papers. They were strong spiritualists.

A Scotch settlement consisting of several families was situated about nine or ten miles east of Olatha.



# THE SEMI-PRECIOUS STONES OF WEBSTER, NUCKOLLS AND FRANKLIN COUNTIES, NEBRASKA

BY REV. DENNIS G. FITZGERALD

[A paper read at the annual meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society, January, 1912.]

At the end of May, 1906, I took up my residence in Red Cloud, Webster county, Nebraska. From the very first day of my residence in the county my attention was very closely attracted to its geological formation. To the south of the Republican river is a range of hills reaching into Kansas and extending from Hardy, Nuckolls county, northwestward along the course of the river for hundreds of miles. The country north of Red Cloud can not be seen from the town; so one beautiful summer evening I took a walk northward from the city, and at a distance of about a mile and a half my attention was suddenly arrested by a sand formation which extended east and west in well-defined strata. The formation was so regular in its irregularity that I at once perceived it to be the southern boundary of a great and ancient river. Further investigations showed beyond all doubt that before me, and to the east and the west, was the disturbed bed of this river, from two to three miles wide and of a very tortuous course. Here was a very interesting field for investigation.

The sand formation was mixed, in places, with a coarse gravel, and in this coarse gravel were some pebbles of an unusual appearance which I brought home in my pockets and afterward sent to Tiffany & Co. of New York, who very graciously gave me much valuable information,

and returned the stones by registered mail. Following is the letter, in part, I received from them under date of January 23, 1908:

"DEAR SIR:—The stones you sent us are chalcedony and jasper of value only as mineral specimens, and as such we could use a few for our collection. If you have any finer ones, we would be pleased to see them. . . . .

"Very truly yours, Tiffany & Co."

Guided by this information I continued my prospecting, picking up in each trip better stones, a collection of which I sent to Tiffany and Company. The reply I received very agreeably surprised me, for they offered to buy the stones. The following is their letter:

"DEAR SIR:—We are in receipt of your stones and can give you \$5 for the agates in the tin and paper box. The others we do not care for. Awaiting your pleasure we are,

"Respectfully, Tiffany & Co."

I wrote immediately accepting the five dollars for the stones. I continued my investigations and found a vast field containing many and various beautiful stones. I sent to Messrs. Tiffany and Company another collection in the early part of the following May, and here is their reply:

"DEAR SIR:—What you send us are agate pebbles and agatized wood, interesting, but not of such color as to have a gem value. Some of the State Geological people at Lincoln, Nebr., might be interested in them. We return them by registered mail.

"Very truly yours, Tiffany & Co."

I wrote to the department of the interior, sending a small box of little specimens and stating that Tiffany & Co., of New York, had given me certain information relative to similar stones. The answer is as follows:

"SIR:—In reply to your letter of March 25, transmitting a package of minerals for identification: I can add nothing to the information you have already received through Tiffany & Company. Their statement that the pebbles consist of chalcedony and jasper is perfectly correct.

To what extent they might be used for ornamental purposes would have to be determined by some manufacturing jeweler. Most of the material of that kind used in jewelry is cut and polished in Germany where labor is very cheap. That fact seems to limit the usefulness of such minerals when found in small specimens like those which you send.

“Very respectfully, Geo. Chas. Smith, Director.”

I sent only small specimens but with the request for their return at my expense. They were not returned, so I presume that the director of the department kept them and, I trust, classified them as specimens from Nebraska. Soon after this I got the address of lapidaries in Denver, and from them I got further information. The collection which I now possess were mostly cut and polished by the George Bell Co., of Denver, Colorado. They also classified the specimens as I sent them in to be cut or polished.

About this time I made the acquaintance of Mr. Herman Brown, living near Upland, Franklin county, who became intensely interested in the finding of those semi-precious stones; and he now possesses a very fine collection of cut stones, many of which he has had mounted, making very beautiful pieces of jewelry. He was especially fortunate in the beautiful specimens of moss agate which he found in Franklin county, in the bed of the Thompson river [creek]. The coarse gravel was washed by heavy rains into the bed of the stream, and when the waters passed away the pebbles were left high and dry. Mr. Brown was in Red Cloud in December of 1909, and when he arrived home, he wrote me the following letter:

“DEAR FATHER:—Thinking perhaps I might have a few items interesting to you at this time, I am writing this. So first of my return trip: I took it very leisurely, arriving Sunday, just at night. I ‘interviewed’ several formations, finding ever something new; one place was especially noticeable for a few really fine specimens of jasper.

“At one place that I hunted over a man came out from a nearby house, and wanted to know if there was ‘anything



the matter with me'; then, when he came to understand something of what I was after, his tongue became loosened, and he proceeded to tell me all about it. I could not get a word in edgewise. He invited me into his house to see some 'rocks' he had. I was informed he had just returned from a trip about eighty miles east and eighty miles south from the state line into Kansas, where he had been visiting friends &c., and brought forth some peculiar specimens of clay, sand &c. and a specimen which really did interest me. He gave me a little piece I am sending you herein. He wanted to know if it was lava or petrified wood and said there was any amount of it, and in larger pieces, to be had. It was difficult to get an intelligent description of the formation. He said it was a very rough country where he was at. I am not sufficiently informed to judge, yet I thought it might be decomposed or partially rotted lava (?). If so, could it have come from 'Sappa Peak'? Perhaps, in the bounds of possibility. From his description I locate the place as approximately some eighty or more miles southeast of Red Cloud. He told me the county; I wrote the address on something which I am not able to find for you now. It was in the southwest corner of the county. Or is this only a piece of wood?

"Well, I have only been able to extend my search upon one occasion, to a formation not before visited and situated northwest from Franklin. This locality was noticeable for some very beautiful and clear amber specimens of chalcedony found, and also some quite white and transparent. These have suggested to me a thought, in explanation say, perhaps many of these very light and transparent specimens of chalcedony were once the 'chrysoprase'. The 'International' is authority for this statement. I quote: 'Chrysoprase is a variety of chalcedony, the apple green color of which is due to the presence of a small quantity of nickel oxide . . . Was much sought after as a gemstone, but as it loses its color if kept in a warm place—is no longer much prized.

"You may perhaps recall my comment that with the abundance of chalcedony everywhere in evidence we should find a complete collection of all varieties. I have everything but the chrysoprase. If this authority is correct, we can-

not hope to find this stone in this exposed formation that has been open to many, many sun's heat.

"I am sending in this mail a preliminary letter of inquiry to the Bell firm, Denver. A collection of some thirty-five really pretty specimens is tempting me to have them cut and polished, but there is one regret in that, with much diligent search, I have as yet not found the topaz stone. I am afraid it is not in the Franklin county formation . . . .

"Yours sincerely,

H. M. BROWN, Upland, Nebr."

Since the writing of this letter Mr. Brown has found in his county many specimens of the Topaz stone, both white, smoky and a plum color.

In March, 1910, I received the following interesting letter:

"DEAR FATHER: It is now my endeavour to make answer to your interesting letter of February 9th, and chronicle many things passing by . . . .

"I could only spend the one day at Red Cloud and left next morning for Naponee where I spent a day exploring for specimens and can now report in some detail of the question you at one time raised as to 'how far west this formation extends'. As to Franklin county, I can say the 'drift' is found at about eight miles north of Riverton in series of gravel outcrops; going west it trends more southward and the gravel pockets occur in a series of recurring points to about three miles north of Franklin, at Bloomington two to three miles, and at Naponee about five to six miles, but rather 'peter out'. I penetrated a mile or more west of the county line without finding anything, and the formation at this edge (Naponee) contained but few specimens worth picking up. They are more plentiful working eastward, and evidences of volcanic action, it seems to me, are plainer. However, in all of Franklin county's deposits there occurs nothing quite like the formation north of Red Cloud . . .

"With regards, your friend,

"H. M. BROWN, Upland, Nebr."

The specimen that Mr. Brown describes in his letter is a triangular piece of chalcedony, resembling a triangle in its original formation, and is amongst the collection of cut-stones now on exhibition in the State Historical Society's rooms. His letter also is interesting in telling us how far west the gravel formation extends—as far as he knows—where those semi-precious stones may be found. I have traced the formation as far east as Hardy, near the point where the Republican river turns south into Kansas. From this place west to Naponee is a distance of some seventy miles, and so in this extensive territory is found the sand and gravel formation containing an interesting variety of uncommon stones. I do not on my own authority name these stones that I have found, but I rely upon the authority of Tiffany & Company, the geological department at Washington, the Geo. Bell Company, of Denver, and others.

According to the official list of stones discovered in the states, Nebraska has only been credited with two, namely, chalcedony and pearl; but I have found many other kinds in the past few years, about which there is no uncertainty, and a great number of others about which I am uncertain. The first lot of stones I sent to Tiffany and Co. were described as chalcedony, jasper and agates. The Geo. Bell Co., of Denver, have called the stones I have sent them topaz, clear and smoky; moss agates, agatized and opalized wood; the amazonite stone; the feldspar; and the jasper pebbles in many varieties. Not being certain of many other specimens, I withhold giving them a name.

Whilst writing this paper, Mr. T. M. Draper, of Humboldt, Nebraska, has called on me and shown me some very small and beautiful rubies or garnets, and sapphires of a delicate canary color, which he has discovered near Humboldt, in Richardson county, where he has also found traces of gold.

It is a very easy matter to recognize precious or semi-precious stones when they are found in their original



formation, and the text books on mineralogy are a very great help; but it is a very different proposition to recognize those stones in a changed condition and in formations foreign to their original surroundings. This leads me to observe two things: all the stones found, with very few exceptions, are fractured; and they are scattered over a very extensive distance. Sometimes one kind is found in one place and another in another place, and again many kinds are mixed together. Again, different kinds of stones are fused together and show the action of intense heat. I have found in certain places mica embedded in the stones and, in a few cases, pieces of mica so artistically arranged in pebbles as to rival the skill of the jeweler.

Putting all these things together, I am forced to come to the conclusion that some great upheaval must have taken place in this territory in the very remote past. Most of us have come to the conclusion that volcanic action has been one of the causes that have brought together so many different specimens of an unusual quality. My investigation, I may say here in passing, has been confined solely to what I could pick up on the surface of the ground, never having dug or sought for any specimens below the surface. What may be found by digging and sifting is a matter which concerns the future, and which may reveal more interesting specimens than have been already found.

In stating that this territory was volcanic at one time I wish to have it understood that it was a very, very long time ago, even before the great volcanoes of Mexico were ever heard of and Mounts Aetna and Vesuvius were dormant and still. This being so, we can readily understand why nearly all the stones found are more or less fractured and why so many show evidences of intense heat. It may have been that when the waters which once covered Nebraska poured into the volcanoes, resulting continued eruptions threw up from the bowels of the earth, softened

by heat, shattered by the fall from a great height, but the parts adhering as they cooled, the fractured specimens which we find to-day.

Or it may be the action of water, of which we have undoubted proof, that has gathered them into the formations of sand and gravel in which we find them to-day. But, no matter what the agency, they are there in vast profusion, and how long they have been there no man may say. They are the pages of nature's book, and we can, if we please, read between the lines. To many they may be of no interest whatever, but to many others the source of great pleasure or intense delight. Some may despise them because they are a Nebraska product, but there are others who prize them because they are some of the multitudinous products of our great state. They are perhaps, after all, only indications of more precious things that a keener search may reveal. The pursuit of them has been a mixture of some labor and keen delight, and the elixir of life and health.

I do not wish to pose here as a deep student of geology or mineralogy—for I have found both studies exceedingly difficult—but as one who has made some observations in both fields I give to those who are interested the fruits of my discoveries, if they may be so called. I have purposely avoided all scientific expressions and names—and they are very abundant in the fields of geology and mineralogy—, so that the simplest may be able to follow me in what I have written, and that they may, if they feel so inclined, hunt for themselves in the pure country air of Nebraska things beautiful in what appears to be her unproductive and useless sandhills.

A small beginning has been made, and no man knows to what it might lead. The sands of the Ganges have yielded precious things, and the wastes of Africa and South America have done the same. The "great American desert" has

become a garden, and her gravel walks may yield up a multiplicity of precious stones.

“Gems are mineral flowers, the blossoms of the dark, hard mines. They are the most lasting of all earthly objects, the most beautiful as well as the most unperishable form in which matter appears.

“Gold will wear away; silver will tarnish; wood will decay; the granite stone itself will disintegrate; but jewels will continue unchanged for thousands of years.

“Symbols be they of eternal love and joy that is forevermore.”



## HISTORICAL SKETCH OF CHEYENNE COUNTY, NEBRASKA

BY ALBERT WATKINS

Cheyenne county was organized by authority of an act of the second state legislature approved June 12, 1867. This legislature was called in the third special session for the main purpose of passing laws for carrying on the new state government. The county comprised all the territory lying between the one hundred and second and the one hundred and fourth degrees of longitude and the forty-first and forty-second degrees of latitude. It was about one hundred and four miles in length and seventy in breadth, and its area exceeded that of twelve counties of the usual size.

Perhaps the continuous Indian warfare at that time kept the scanty white population from organizing a county government until three years after the passage of the enabling act. On the fifth of July, 1870, David Butler, governor for the state, on the petition of "a large number of the citizens of the unorganized county of Cheyenne," issued a proclamation<sup>1</sup> ordering an election to be held at the post office in Sidney, on the fourteenth of August, 1870, for the purpose of choosing three county commissioners, a clerk, a treasurer, a sheriff, a probate judge, a surveyor, a superintendent of schools, a coroner, three judges of election and two clerks of election. The governor appointed Thomas Kane, Joseph Fisher, and Joseph C. Cleburne, judges, and A. F. Davis, and D. S. Martin, clerks of the preliminary election. Accordingly, Andy Golden was elected treasurer; H. A.

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<sup>1</sup> "Messages & Proclamations", in the governor's office.

Dygart, clerk; John G. Ellis, sheriff; D. M. Kelleher, probate judge; H. L. Ellsworth, Frederick Glover and C. A. Moore, commissioners; Alexander Miller, surveyor. Golden did not qualify for the office of county treasurer, and Thomas Kane was appointed to fill the vacancy. No county superintendent of schools was elected until 1871, presumably because the population was so sparse that the organization of schools was impracticable. On that far frontier individuals were so self-sufficient in administering justice that a coroner was needed even less than a superintendent of schools; so it appears that none was elected until 1873. However, by a provision of the statute, the sheriff might act as coroner in case of need.

By a general statute unorganized counties were attached to the next county directly east for judicial and revenue purposes. The northwest corner of the original Lincoln county was contiguous to the southeastern boundary of Cheyenne county. Buffalo county did not join Cheyenne, but was the next county from it directly east. By the act of February 15, 1869<sup>2</sup> the "county of Cheyenne" was attached to Lincoln county for judicial and revenue purposes. There was no election until 1870. By the act of June 6, 1871, Cheyenne was constituted "a separate county for judicial, election, and revenue purposes."

The first general election in which Cheyenne county participated was that of 1870, October 11. The electors voted the straight ticket for state executive officers, uniformly—eighteen for the democratic candidates and sixteen for the republican. David Butler was the republican candidate for governor, and John H. Croxton, of Nebraska City, the democratic candidate. John Taffe, of Omaha, republican candidate for member of congress, received fifteen votes, and George B. Lake, of Omaha, fusion can-

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<sup>2</sup> Laws of Nebraska 1869, p. 249.

didate of the democratic party, and the "people's reform party of the state of Nebraska," nineteen.

According to the United States census of 1870 there were only fifty-two white inhabitants in the "unorganized northwest territory"—all that part of the state west of longitude one hundred and one degrees and thirty minutes—and Cheyenne county is not listed at all; but the United States census returns of 1880 give the population of the county in 1870 as one hundred and ninety, without explaining how or when it was ascertained. The state began to make annual enumerations in 1874, and that year the population of Cheyenne county was four hundred and forty-nine; it was four hundred and fifty-seven in 1875, four hundred and seventy-six (estimated) in 1876<sup>3</sup>, eight hundred and ninety-nine in 1878<sup>4</sup>; by the United States census, 1,558 in 1880; by the state census 1,653 in 1885; by the United States census 5,693 in 1890; 5,570 in 1900; 4,551 in 1910.

On the sixth of November, 1888, a majority of the voters of Cheyenne county authorized the creation of the counties of Banner, Deuel, Kimball, and Scott's Bluff out of its own territory; and they were organized accordingly. By the United States census of 1890, Banner county contained a population of 2,435; Deuel, 2,893; Kimball, nine hundred fifty-nine; Scott's Bluff, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-eight; total, 8,175. This sum added to the population of the reduced Cheyenne county in 1890—5,693—gives 13,868 as the population contained in the territory of the original Cheyenne county in 1890. Again, by authority of an election held November 3, 1908, Morrill county was formed out of Cheyenne, and by the census of 1910 the population of the new county was 4,584. This sum added to 4,551, the population of the reduced Cheyenne county for

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<sup>3</sup> Senate Journal 1877, p. 879.

<sup>4</sup> Nebraska Legislative Manual 1877, p. 48.



1910, yields 9,135 as the population contained in the territory of Cheyenne county as it was before Morrill county was taken from it.

In 1880 the population of Sidney precinct was 1,173, and that of the town of Sidney, 1,069. In 1890 the population of Sidney precinct was 1,365. That of the town of Sidney was not enumerated singly. In 1900 the population of Sidney was 1,001; in 1910, 1,185. In 1880 the population of the several precincts was as follows: Sidney, one thousand one hundred and seventy-three; Lodge Pole, ninety-seven; Antelope, thirty-eight; Big Spring, ninety-nine; Court House Rock, eighty-five; Potter, sixty-six; total 1,558. Greenwood, a village in Lodge Pole precinct, had fifty inhabitants, and Camp Clarke, in Court House Rock precinct, forty-eight.

Prior to 1876 the white population of the county was confined to ranchers along the Oregon and California road, who catered to the travelers, and employees at the stations of the overland stage company. Additions were caused also by the advent of the Union Pacific railroad. Sidney was started as a station of the road which reached its site in August, 1867. In 1876 Sidney became an important junction and outfitting point of the large emigration to the Black Hills caused by important discoveries of gold. The effect of this movement is indicated by the large increase in the population of the county in 1878 over that of 1876. <sup>5</sup>The

<sup>5</sup> Following is the progressive population of the territory of the original Cheyenne county:

	1880	1890	1900	1910
Cheyenne.....	1558	5693	5570	4551
Banner.....formed from Cheyenne, 1888..		2435	1114	1444
Deuel.....		2893	2630	1786
Kimball.....		959	758	1942
Scott's Bluff..		1888	2552	8355
Morrill.....	1908..			4584
Garden.....	Deuel, 1909..			3538
TOTALS.....	1558	13868	12624	26200

census of 1876 was taken, evidently, before the tide of travel had set in. Camp Clarke also became an important center of population and business through the same influence.

Cheyenne county was appropriately named for the Cheyenne Indians, a tribe of the great Algonkian family. They lived on the lower Cheyenne river in the eighteenth century, but in the early part of the nineteenth century were driven into the Black Hills by the more powerful and relentless Sioux. About 1845 they had become wanderers between the north fork of the Platte river and the Arkansas, and in this way they became separated into two bands called Northern Cheyenne and Southern Cheyenne. The Southern Cheyenne united with the Arapaho, their kinsmen. In these migrations they roamed and hunted over the territory afterward formed into Cheyenne county, and the vicinity of Julesburg was a favorite rendezvous. In 1865 the Cheyenne at the Upper Platte agency numbered seven hundred and twenty; those of the Upper Arkansas agency, 1,600. The Arapaho of the South separated from the Cheyenne in 1872. At the same time the Arapaho at these agencies numbered respectively 1,800 and 1,500. In May, 1877, nine hundred and thirty-seven Cheyenne were taken from Red Cloud agency to Indian Territory. In September of the same year about three hundred, under Dull Knife, came north to join the Sioux. They carried captives captured in the Custer fight the year before. Their total number has since become somewhat, but not greatly, reduced. The Cheyenne were fierce fighters. The men were noted for their fine physique and the women for their good looks.

Early in the decade of 1860-1870 the Cheyenne and the Sioux began to resent the intrusion of the great number of white travelers and settlers into their territory, and in the summer of 1864 they began a concerted attack on the line of the California road, from the Little Blue valley four

hundred miles westward. The war continued with occasional cessation for about fifteen years. The construction of the Pacific railroad increased the hostility of the Indians, and their attacks were furious in 1867 while the Union Pacific railroad was passing through their country. The Cheyenne and Sioux coöperated in this long war.

The most important military contest within the territory which afterward comprised Cheyenne county is called the battle of Ash Hollow. This battle occurred on the third of September, 1855, at a point on Blue Water creek, about seven miles northwest of the mouth of Ash Hollow, between nine companies of United States troops commanded by General W. S. Harney and about seven hundred Brulé, Ogalala, and Minneconjou Sioux and Northern Cheyenne. The Indians were decisively defeated with a loss of eighty-six killed and about seventy women and children captured. On the night before the battle General Harney's force camped at the mouth of Ash Hollow.

In the early part of the decade of 1850-60 one Jules Benoit, or Bené, established a ranch on the south side of the Platte river about a mile east of the mouth of Lodge Pole Creek.<sup>6</sup> This place became an important station on the California road. Early in September, 1864, company F of the Seventh Iowa cavalry began the erection of sod buildings for a military post at a point about one mile west of Jules Station and opposite the mouth of the Lodge Pole.<sup>7</sup> The order to establish the post was issued May 19, 1864, and its official name was Camp Rankin until it was changed to Fort Sedgwick by an order of September 27, 1865, in honor of Major General John Sedgwick who was killed in the battle of Spottsylvania Court House, Virginia, in 1864. On the seventh of January, 1865, the company named attacked over a thousand Cheyenne and Arapaho Indians,

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<sup>6</sup> The Indian War of 1864 (Ware), p. 427.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 326; Report of Secretary of War, 2d Sess., 40th Cong., p. 436.



near the post, and were repulsed with a loss of fourteen killed. Fifty-six Indians were killed.

On the sixth and seventh of February, 1865, a large force of Indians besieged two hundred men of the Eleventh Ohio cavalry, at Mud Springs, but the white soldiers held their post. On the second of February, 1865, about 1,500 Cheyenne and Arapaho burned all the buildings at Julesburg and attacked the fort, but did not succeed in capturing it before they discovered the near approach of Colonel Robert R. Livingston with a detachment of four hundred men of the Seventh Iowa cavalry and the First Nebraska veteran volunteer cavalry, when they abandoned the siege.

The famous Oregon Trail traversed the territory afterward formed into Cheyenne county, entering it from the east on the south side of the south fork which it crossed at various places not far beyond, reaching the north fork at Ash Hollow and following its bank until it crossed to reach the Sweetwater. The Mormon road, and later the California road, starting from Omaha, ran along the north side of the Platte until they crossed near Fort Laramie, crossing again at the bend of the river about one hundred and twenty-five miles farther on.

The earliest travelers to and beyond the Rocky mountains followed the Missouri to its upper reaches. In 1824 W. H. Ashley, a noted fur trader, led a party of three hundred men over the cut-off route afterwards called the Oregon Trail into the Green river fur fields. In 1830, William, Sublette, a former associate of Ashley's, took the first wagons—ten in number—to the mountains by this route. In 1832 Nathaniel J. Wyeth, of Boston, and William Sublette went over the route with a party of about eighty men and three hundred horses. In the same year the famous Captain Bonneville took a train of twenty wagons. These were the first wagons to cross the Rocky mountains. The first organized band of Oregon emigrants, about a hundred and

twenty in number, went in 1842, and another company of about one thousand in 1843; and John C. Fremont, the famous explorer, followed closely after them. The road became known as the Oregon Trail about this time. About fifteen hundred Mormons went through on the north side of the river in 1847. The first band, numbering one hundred and forty-nine, passed the mouth of Ash Hollow on the opposite side of the river, on the 20th of May. In 1857, an army of 2,500, under command of Albert Sidney Johnston, afterward the famous confederate general, who was killed at the battle of Shiloh, marched over the road to quell the Mormon insurrection at Salt Lake City. About three thousand more soldiers were started from Fort Leavenworth in the spring of 1858, but the greater part of them were recalled at various points along the road. The remainder re-enforced Johnston's army at Salt Lake. In all 4,956 wagons and carriages and 53,430 draught animals were required for this expedition. Not far from Fort Kearny, a band of Cheyenne successfully ran off eight hundred beef cattle which were being driven out in 1857, to supply the Salt Lake army.

Lieutenant General Sherman, commander of the division of the Missouri, traveled over the trail, as far as Fort Laramie, in August, 1866, to make a personal military inspection of that warlike part of his command. He traveled by railroad from St. Louis to St. Joseph, thence by steamboat to Omaha, thence by the Union Pacific road as far as it was finished—to a point five miles east of Fort Kearny—thence by ambulance drawn by mules to Fort Laramie. On account of the continuing Indian hostilities, he went as far as Fort Sedgwick in 1867, and remained there from June 6 to June 22.

Military posts were established all along the great highway to Oregon and California for the protection of travelers—Fort Kearny, the first, in 1848. In August and

September, 1864, Captain Shuman, of the Eleventh Ohio cavalry, built Camp Shuman at a point three miles west of the Scott's Bluff gap. The post was afterward named Fort Mitchell, for General Robert B. Mitchell then commander of the district. At the same time minor fortifications were built at Ficklin's, and Mud Springs. Ficklin's was nine miles east of Scott's Bluff, and Mud Springs, at the north end of "Jules' Stretch," was eight miles easterly from Courthouse Rock. This new route or cut-off was named for Jules, the ranchman. It crossed the south fork of the Platte river at his establishment, continued up the south bank of the Lodge Pole thirty-five miles, then across the stream and the high plateau thirty-two miles to Mud Springs in the valley of the North Platte. Passing about two miles southwest of Courthouse Rock, it intersected the old Ash Hollow road about midway between Courthouse Rock and Chimney Rock.

Fort Grattan was built of sod at the mouth of Ash Hollow by General Harney's command, immediately after the battle of that name. It was abandoned on the first of the following October when the force left to occupy Fort Pierre on the Missouri river. Fort Grattan was named for Lieutenant John L. Grattan, who with a detachment of twenty-nine men was killed on the nineteenth of August, 1854, by a band of over a thousand Sioux warriors, about six miles below Fort Laramie. General Harney pursued these Indians and punished them at Ash Hollow.

Fort Sidney was established December 13, 1867, as a subpost of Fort Sedgwick and was known as Sidney Barracks. It became an independent post November 28, 1870, and was abandoned June 1, 1874. Its reservation of six hundred and twenty acres was relinquished to the department of the interior November 14, 1894, except twenty acres of the northeast corner which was donated to Sidney for cemetery purposes, by act of congress, June 10, 1892.



In 1875 part of the building material of dismantled Fort Kearny was used in improvements of Fort Sidney.

Cheyenne county contained the famous Wild Cat range of mountains which became celebrated by reports of the early travelers. Among the most noted peaks, near the great road, are Courthouse Rock and Chimney Rock, now in Morrill county, and Scott's Bluff, now in Scott's Bluff county. The two highest peaks in Nebraska are Hogback 5,082 feet, and Wild Cat, 5,038 feet—both in Banner county. The plain of the northwest part of Kimball county attains the highest elevation of the state, 5,300 feet.

## ORGANIZATION OF THE COUNTIES OF KEARNEY, FRANKLIN, HARLAN AND PHELPS

BY ALBERT WATKINS

An act of the territorial legislature, passed January 10, 1860, authorized the organization of Kearney county and defined its boundaries which included the territory now comprised in the counties of Franklin, Harlan, Kearney and Phelps. The act in question directed the governor to appoint county officers and he thereupon commissioned J. Tracy, Amos O. Hook and Moses Sydenham for county commissioners; Dr. Charles A. Henry, county clerk; John Holland, treasurer; Thomas Collins, sheriff; John Talbot,<sup>1</sup> probate judge.

Kearney City was designated in the act as the county seat. It was established by the Kearney City company in the spring of 1859 and was situated just outside the western line of the Fort Kearny reservation, two miles due west from the fort. It grew up on trade with the occupants of the fort and travelers to California, Oregon, Salt Lake City and the Pike's Peak gold fields. In the spring of 1860, according to a statement in the *Huntsman's Echo*, November 2, 1860, there were only five "hovels" in Kearney City; but by November of that year it had grown to forty or fifty buildings, about a dozen of them stores. According to the same paper—April 25, 1861—there were two hundred residents and a half dozen stores in Kearney City at that date. The opening of the Union Pacific railroad—in that part of the territory in 1866—attracted business and

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<sup>1</sup> Died at Cheyenne, Wyo., in 1911. D. W. Clendenan says he kept a saloon there and was called "Major" Talbot.

inhabitants from Kearney City. In 1860 it was not recognized in the United States census while the population of the county was 469; so that the place grew up suddenly during the latter part of the year. At the election of 1860 111 votes were cast in the county; in 1864, 61; in 1865, 16; in 1866, 28. An act of the tenth territorial session, February 9, 1865, attempted to revive the organization of the county, by ordering a special election of county officers to be held on the second Monday in March, 1865, at the store of William D. Thomas, Kearney City. The act provided that the notice of the election should be signed by the county clerk—James M. Pyper.<sup>2</sup> There were no more election returns from the county after 1866 until 1872, when, under reorganization, fifty-eight votes were cast. It appears that the county government was dormant in the intervening time. It was revived by authority of a proclamation issued by Acting Governor William H. James May 2, 1872, ordering an election for county officers to be held "at the town of Lowell", June 17, 1872.

Franklin county was set off from the original Kearney county by an act of the last territorial legislature, passed February 16, 1867. A supplementary act of March 9, 1871, "for the speedy organization of Franklin county", designated C. J. Van Laningham, D. Van Etten and R. D. Curry as county commissioners. These officers were directed to qualify as soon as practicable after the passage of the act and to call an election for county officers, giving fifteen days public notice of the time and place thereof. The commissioners were also authorized to submit the question of locating the county seat at the same election. January 14, 1871, Governor Butler issued a proclamation for an election of county officers to be held at the house of C. J. Van Laningham, in Franklin City, on Friday, March

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<sup>2</sup> Laws of Nebraska, Tenth Territorial Session, 1865, p. 61).



3, of that year; but evidently no election was held, and so the legislature intervened as already stated.

May 20, 1872, Acting Governor James ordered an election of county officers for Harlan county, to be held June 29 of that year—for precinct No. 1, at the store of John McPherson; for precinct No. 2, at the store of Frank A. Beiyon. Precinct No. 1 comprised all that part of the territory east of range 19, and precinct No. 2 that part west of range 18. The act of February 11, 1873, defining the boundaries of Phelps county, designated Edward Barnes, Caleb J. Dilworth, and J. Q. Mustgrove as county commissioners. They were required to qualify within sixty days after the passage of the act and to call an election for county officers, including county commissioners, within thirty days of their qualification.<sup>3</sup>

An act of March 3, 1873, authorized Kearney county to fund its indebtedness by the issue of bonds to the amount of \$20,000.

The *Nebraska State Journal* of July 8, 1870, notes that F. A. Beiyon intends to go with a party from Lincoln to the Republican valley about the first of August. The *Daily State Journal* of April 7, 1871, notes that Franklin county has completed its organization with the election of officers as follows: county commissioners, James Knight, Charles Vining, B. W. Powell; probate judge, C. L. Van Laningham; clerk, Matthew Lynch; sheriff and surveyor, Ernest Arnold; treasurer, John E. Simmons; superintendent of public instruction, Richard Walters.

The *Daily Journal* of January 10, 1871, notes that General Victor Vifquain is booming the settlement in the Republican valley. He says that not less than five hundred claims had been taken the past year. The site of the new

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<sup>3</sup> For a statement of votes cast at elections in Kearney county for 1860, 1864, 1865 and 1866 see the *Illustrated History of Nebraska*, v. 1, pp. 439, 493, 505.

town, called Napoleon, the future county seat of the county to be formed west of Franklin (Harlan), belonged to about thirty men. They had offered a mill site to the men who would build a mill upon it. General Vifquain insisted that Fort Kearny should be moved down into the Republican valley because, traffic having ceased along the south side of the Platte, it was useless in its original position. But the new town was called Orleans instead of Napoleon, and Alma, situated about five miles east, became the county seat.

In the *Daily State Journal* of June 22, 1872, a correspondent, writing under date of June 10, describes Kearney City. It was composed mostly of sod and log houses, "old and weather-beaten". There were about twenty-five houses in all, most of them in a decaying condition. There were innumerable old wagons and considerable other government property, which, the correspondent thought, would be "knocked down to the highest bidder one of these days". Moses Sydenham was booming Kearney City as the coming national capital. The office of his newspaper, the *Central Star*, was situated there. There was only an occasional settler along the road five miles west; and there were none on Plum Creek twenty-eight miles west.

## ANNUAL ADDRESS OF JOHN LEE WEBSTER PRESIDENT, 1913

[Read at the annual meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society,  
January 16, 1913.]

There is a well authenticated tradition among the Omaha Tribe of Indians, that, impelled by a spirit of migration like that which has gone with the white man from the cradle of his life in the far east to his invasion of the red man's country, they took up their journey from their eastern home near the headwaters of the Ohio and followed that river to the union of its waters with the Mississippi, and thence up the eastern side of the Missouri, and eventually permanently settled three and a half centuries ago in what afterward became known as the Nebraska region, and where they were subsequently found by the white man some two hundred and fifty years later.

The Omaha, when they came into this region, were invaders of the hunting lands of the Sioux, and both tribes having warlike chieftains, they became inveterate enemies and continued in almost constant warfare. Within the memory of the white man the Sioux killed the Omaha chieftain, Logan Fontenelle. I give this bit of Indian history because it finds its parallel in the invasion of the Indian lands by the white men at a later day.

Let us pause a moment for a reflection. Three and a half centuries ago. When was that on the page of history? Queen Elizabeth was just beginning her reign. It was about the time of the birth of Shakespeare. The Pilgrims had not landed at Plymouth, nor had the cavaliers settled at Jamestown. It was a period full of historic interest in



Europe, yet these Indians did not know that there was a Europe. They could not have had a conception that in a later day a white race should come across the big waters and take possession of these lands which had been the homes of the Indians through the countless ages of the dim and mysterious past. Yet we have on Nebraska soil a remnant of that ancient tribe of people, a living link connecting that remote past with our self-glorious present. I mention these incidents as a subject of more than passing interest and as an inviting and stimulating subject for historic research by our people.

Afterward there came the pioneer days of the white man following in the wake of the Omaha Indian invasion of this western country. It may be said of the Indians and pioneers alike, that they both loved the serene quiet of the open expanse of the prairies; that they both sought happiness from nature and enjoyed the peace and harmony of the wilderness as if it were a celestial garden set apart for them when the work of the creation was finished.

Those days have now passed into history. They have become the subject of romance. By reason of changed conditions they are impossible of repetition. Their history is only to be gathered from relics and traditions and manuscripts. Yet those days have for us a fascinating interest. They were at the beginning of the history of the progress of our people and the formation of our state.

In 1878 a few of the strongest and most honored citizens of this state, prompted by a strong desire to see that these historic relics and traditions and manuscripts of the past should be collected and housed and preserved for the present and future ages, issued a call for the formation of the Nebraska State Historical Society. Among that group of men were Thomas W. Tipton who had been United States Senator from '67 to '75; Alvin Saunders and Algernon S. Paddock who then were United States

senators; Robert W. Furnas who had been, and Silas Garber who then was governor; J. Sterling Morton the father of Arbor day, and who became a cabinet officer under Grover Cleveland; and George L. Miller the public spirited and forceful editorial writer of the Omaha *Herald*.

These, with others who became associated with them, were men who cherished the remembrance of these Indian and pioneer days as memorable events in our early history, very dear to their hearts, and who were always prompted by a desire to do the most and the best that could be done for the general welfare of the people of our state. So they formed the Nebraska State Historical Society with the purpose, hope and expectation that all legends and traditions of the original inhabitants should be collected, and the relics and material evidence of their lives, habits, customs and manner of dress, should be collected into its museum; and that biographies and memorials and historic materials of every character and sort relating to the pioneer days should be acquired and preserved under the auspices of the society.

Their worthy aim and purpose was that there should be created and fostered a historic society, as an independent and self-controlled organization, which should be the custodian of the historic archives and a place to collect and give out information relating to the early history of these regions and of the passing and current events which have gone along with the making and development of our state. They believed, as Macaulay once said, that "a people that take no pride in the noble achievements of remote ancestors will never achieve anything worthy to be remembered with pride by remote descendants."

This society is still engaged in carrying on the work which its founders originated. How well, and how successfully this has been done may be illustrated by a comparison taken from its records of some things it has accomplished.

The minutes of the society in January, 1879, show that sixteen dollars was appropriated for the purchase of a single bookcase, presumably sufficient to contain all of its books and manuscripts. A report of 1885, seven years after the organization, states that the books and pamphlets of the society, catalogued and uncatalogued, all told, were four hundred and twenty-eight, and that the catalogue of Indian documents and relics which had been collected to that date was so limited that it covered less than two pages of printed matter. To-day the society is in possession of fifty thousand books and pamphlets indexed according to titles, and has thirty-three thousand relics and implements and articles of interest of various sorts on display in the cabinets in its rooms, and has about an equal number stored away in boxes for want of space to exhibit them. The enumerations given above do not include a vast number of letters, memorials, correspondence, and other valuable material relating to our early history.

A large part of the society's collections are stored in the underground apartment of a building east of the capitol grounds, which is awaiting the erection of a superstruction, and the remainder which are on exhibition are in the basement of a building on the university grounds, the entrance to which is uninviting and so limited in accomodations that the property of the society cannot be shown to visitors with advantage.

This collection of historic material is priceless to our people. If you ask me how I measure its worth, I answer,—“What is knowledge worth? what is education worth? what is history worth?” Take them all in all history is worth more than all the others, for without it the others could not exist.

The days<sup>of</sup> of our pioneers stand out as bright spots in our western history. The day will come when the memories of their adventures, their hardships and their successes



will be as dearly cherished by us as are the memories of the settlers at Jamestown to the people of Virginia, and the lives of the Pilgrims and Puritans are to New England.

The West offered to the young pioneer opportunity for the most abundant gratification. There was ease in acquiring lands; there were unsettled modes of life; there was opportunity for adventure; there was a free field for struggle. The West was filled with alluring promises and bright hopes for the future.

The young pioneer bid adieu to home—to its settled, prescribed, regular, inflexible modes of life, and its constrained, contracted promises and slender hopes for the future—with a sense of relief. He preferred to try the new life of unformed society, to assert himself among the new forces, to impress them with his personality, to guide them by his intelligence, and to help in the making, and to be a part of the new state. At that time all of this western country, half the area of the continent, remained to be populated—land to be tilled, mines to be opened, prairies and uplands to become cattle ranges, cities to be built, arts to be cultivated and new states to be formed. That which was a waste, or a solitude, he made a part of the empire of man, ruled by the supremacy of law.

The early Nebraska pioneers were men who possessed the indomitable Anglo-Saxon spirit of courage and adventure which irresistibly impelled them to cross the expanse of the prairies and plains, to search every solitude, to roam over lands that had rarely been moistened by rain. There had been no storms they did not encounter, and no hardships which they did not endure. On their travels westward they have sat by the camp fire at night, and while smoking in silence, lived again in memories their life at home. The husband, through the white moonlight that fell on the faces of his wife and child, thought of their wealth of heart and deemed them as fair as the children of

Eden. Our records tell the story of these pioneers when they camped on the hilltop, and when the shades of evening fell upon them they saw the Indian camp fires flicker in the valley below, their slender, ghostlike columns of smoke rising heavenward and floating away in a white cloud against the dark blue sky of the evening. They heard the soft, plaintive notes of the nighthawk and prairie owl which mingled with the prolonged cry of the wolf in the distant foothills. The night breeze sprang up, fanning the parched prairie with its cool breath. The stars came forth and the silver rim of the moon emerged above the dark clouds, outlining the crests of the hills in broken silvery lines as its full disk swept into view, flooding the valley and plains with strange ethereal light.

The pioneer then learned the wild man's secret—that the stars sang to him as of yore, that the winds and the waters, that the animals, and rocks and trees spoke in harmonies not known to modern civilized man.

The volumes of historical papers and manuscripts in the rooms of the society tell substantially all that is known of the rivers, of the uplands, and of the prairies, beautiful in their wilderness and impressive, as they are boundless, when they were the homes of the American Indians. They tell of the time when the territory west of the Missouri river was a solitude, save when here and there on its eastern fringe there was an embryo settlement, or a trapper's hut, or a missionary's abode. They tell of a time when the Nebraska territory extended northward to the British possessions and westward across the prairies, and over the mountains to the western limits of the Louisiana Purchase.

They tell of the lives and the hardships of the pioneers who lived to see law and order, and the white man's civilization spread silently but steadily over this immense territorial realm, following the peaceful communities whose aggressive industry had conquered and settled localities along the

virgin valleys and the hill slopes, protecting and shadowing the pioneer in his prairie dugout, the freighter on his lonely path to the outposts, and the miner in his far cabin on the mountain side, the herder in the solitudes of the unmeasured plains, the citizen wheresoever his remote home or rude abode—that same law and order and civilization which has made possible the cities which have sprung up like magic creations from the soil. They tell how that vast expanse of territory, from the Missouri to the coast, has been formed into new states and become the homes of millions of American citizens.

Our more recent books and publications give us the biographies of men whose boyhood days were over before the building of the first railroad and before electricity came into use—that mysterious thing that links the natural with the supernatural as it carries messages along telegraph wires or on lines of cable under the ocean, or the human voice through the telephone, or delivers its wireless messages as winged spirits unseen and unheard, a realization in our time of something more wonderful than the mythical legend of the daughters of Odin carrying through boundless space the souls of military heroes to the far off Walhalla.

Why preserve the biographies and records of the days of these pioneers? Why concern ourselves with their hardships, their adventures, their impulses, their motives? Why dwell upon the influences, multitudinous and varied, which took them out into the wilderness and solitudes? I answer again, because they made history in the west as our forefathers made it in the east. Without them our cities would not be here, our railroads would not be here, our commerce would not be here, our prosperity would not be here, our state would not be here, and we ourselves would not be here. Ah, more! Out of the expanse of wild nature they extended the borders of the republic.

There are some good citizens who are indifferent to



the antiquities of the red man, who have no concern with anything relating to his past existence. They may ask the question why is it worth while to preserve the thirty thousand specimens of Indian relics, implements, utensils and apparel which the society has in its possession? I answer, they have a special value as they give us a lesson of human life. Nothing in the world's history, in so far as we know it, possesses so much interest as the beginning and the end of the existence of a race of people. We know little of when the life of the red man began, but we are the witnesses of his rapid disappearance.

We little remember that these lands where the husbandmen plow the fields and gather the harvests, were once the homes and hunting grounds of another and almost extinct race of people. It is a transition from a red man's village of tepees to a white man's city of brick and stone and steel buildings. Yet we take no account of the change. We have forgotten the red man, and many who do remember him measured him by our own self arrogant standard of ideals, and so regarded him as a useless encumbrance upon the lands he possessed, with no recognized right to live upon them when his occupancy stood in the way of the white man's invasion.

When we listen to the Indian's side of the story we have presented to us another viewpoint of his rights. Standing Bear, a Ponka chieftain, who had been wrongfully and forcefully removed with his people to the Indian Territory and who afterward returned to his old home on his northern reservation, and was about to be again removed by the government's agents, spoke some caustic and severe truths, when he said to them, "You can read and write and I can't, you can think that you know everything and that I know nothing. If some man should take you a thousand miles from home, as you did me, and leave you in a strange country without one cent of money, where you did not

know the language and could not speak a word, you would never have got home in the world. You don't know enough. This is my land. The Great Father did not give it to me. My people were here and owned this land before there was any Great Father. God gave it to me".

As white men we measure our success and all that we do and all that we accomplish by the environments with which we are surrounded. By our commerce we trade with all the world, and we gather the articles that supply our necessities and luxuries from all the producing countries of the earth. Take us as we are, and we could not live without them.

With the Indian it was not so. He lived in the land where God created him. He had no commerce. He had no mills or factories. He had the capacity to create for himself out of the products of nature what he needed to supply his wants. The Great Spirit seemed infinite and dwelt with him, and communed with him from the majestic mountains and spoke to him from the bright and beautiful stars.

If the Indian were here to-day, he might walk into the museum of our historical society and point to a rope made of the hairs of a buffalo and truthfully say that it was woven by the fingers of Indian women at a time when there was no other method of manufacture known to his race. That rope of buffalo hair hanging in the cabinet is a specimen of native ingenuity which contrasts the life of a red man, in the days when we regarded the prairies as an uninhabitable wilderness, with our days of civilized world affiliation.

When the Indian looks at that rope he may say to the white man with some degree of plausibility: "What do you really know of life as it really is? You were not born under the open heavens; you have not slept on the hard, cold ground, exposed to inclement weather and nearly perishing of hunger and thirst. Could you feed and clothe yourself

from the naked earth without the assistance of others? We have carried wood and water, cooked and fed and clothed ourselves from the materials gathered by our own hands. Where our tent was set at night or where the foot rested, that was home to us. We roamed at times, and then longed to lie down in the embrace of mother earth and breathe the smoke of the camp fire. But the wanderlust would come—a feeling of unrest—like that of the birds when the spell of spring or autumn comes upon them, and the migratory instinct seizes them, or like that of the great herds of reindeer in the north which travel each year to the sea to drink of its salty waters, and which, if prevented, die.

The aborigines were a people who never willingly submitted to the rule of the white man, but tenaciously held to the ancient beliefs and customs of their forefathers. They were a proud spirited people whose chiefs had the personal dignity of born rulers and the fearless qualities of military commanders.

We white men take just and honorable pride in our arts, and in our education, in our philosophies and in our scientific attainments, but the native Indian sage may ask how long these will continue to civilize us. He might call our attention to the writings of a sentimental American who has expressed the belief that unless the trend of modern materialistic tendencies becomes supplanted by something higher, the same fate that overtook the ancients must inevitably overtake us.

We of to-day are apt to say: "Behold the works and glories of the white man!" But the Indian may say: "I see in your ancient past lands that are desolate and the ruins of your greatness. The same mountains that stood guard over those valleys and shadowed you in those prosperous ages now look down upon broken monoliths and remains of decaying temples. The mountains stand as permanently now as then, but overlook a desolation not much dissimilar



to the solitude of a deserted Indian habitation on our western plains".

The Egyptians, once so highly civilized that they were the supreme rulers of the world, have gone, their buildings and temples have gone, and left us but a few crumbling ruins. They have left us no poetry, no works of literature, no paintings, no sculpture in marble or figures of bronze.

The Carthaginians, once the rulers of Africa, with their cities and ships and commerce and conquering armies under a Hannibal, are no more; and their lands have been despoiled by the invader, like unto the Indian lands.

The Indian, when told of all that we may boast of among the past glories of our race, may answer in words of comment: "The sun shines alike on the just and the unjust, the white man and the red man, and the great world still continues to laugh and goes on its way in spite of men's philosophy".

He might add, too, that his philosophy has taught him that one might as well expect the mountains to slip into the sea or the stars to stop in their courses as a man in love with his own ideal of a vision of beauty to listen to ethics. Why does the grass grow? Why do the birds sing? Why do the flowers turn to the sun? Answer these to the Indian and he will tell you why he loves his ancient and proud spirited independence.

The white man may say to the Indian, "You make war", but he answers, "So do you. Our bad men may steal and murder, but so do yours. We love a personal liberty as well as you. We may have been guilty of indescribable tortures, but we refrain from referring to the pages of history that are filled with descriptions of yours." The Indian might plead the excuse that he had no means of enforcing obedience to law but force, but that white men had officers to maintain the peace and courts to administer the law. Then, too, if the Indian were a visitor to our

museum he might point his finger to the slave shackles, which hang in a cabinet close to the thousands of specimens of Indian relics, and explain: "The red man never held an abject race of people in slavery as did the Americans for near a century of their boasted freedom".

Standing today on the threshold, half way between savagery and civilization, and comparing the cruelties and the barbarisms of the one with the luxuries and vices of the other, the Indian may ask himself the question, "Which is preferable—civilization with its virtues as he sees it, or the simple life of his tribe?" The one may tell the time of the day by the sun and the stars, the other by his watch. The one listens to his music—the opera, the drama—and looks upon works of created art and reads his books, but the other answers, "But what harmony compares to nature? What books contain her hidden truths and mysteries?" The mechanical devices of the one are wonderful, but spiritually both stand where they began centuries ago. So the Indian chieftain said: "The great symphony of nature, the throbs of our mother earth, the song of the forest, the voices of the wind and the waters, the mountains and the plains, and the glory of the stars are grander by far and more satisfactory and enduring to him than the fancies and artificial harmonies created in the name of civilization".

We should not judge the Indian too harshly. He had his standards, his ideals, and his philosophy. He cannot fairly be measured by our standards of life. His age was not our age. His civilization was not our civilization. His memory remains a story of human life.

The collections, in the Nebraska State Historical Society, of books and pamphlets and manuscripts and relics are the only preservations we have of a historic past that can never come again. The original proud, romantic, vigorous and warlike Indians of the plains have disappeared forever. Their insignificant remnants are fast fading away

or disappearing in our civilization. Their hunting grounds have become our tilled farm lands; their battle fields remain unmarked; their chieftain warriors have died and been buried without monuments; their languages have not been transmitted to a succeeding race. Aside from what has been collected and is being preserved in museums and our historical societies, the history of the aboriginal inhabitants of the soil has passed into legends and traditions without a Homer to write them in poetry or a Wagner to put them into music.

The white race has a characteristic which distinguishes it from all other races of people, that of migration and invasion. It began its course in the earliest times in the lands of the east. It kept moving westward, leaving in its wake the ruins of its greatness. When it had peopled Europe it moved westward until it discovered and invaded and peopled America. Our western pioneers were the advance guard of that movement which kept going onward in its westward course until it reached the waters of the Pacific.

The white men in their march met the aboriginal red men and overwhelmed them. They found the arid lands of the prairies and conquered them with fertility. They have built towns and cities in places that were once a solitude. What was once a wilderness has become the homes of millions of men. But there are no more lands to invade; there are no more Indian tribes to conquer; there are no more opportunities for the pioneer. Beyond the Pacific waters are different races of people. The mighty Japan with her brown men, the populous China with her millions of yellow men stand as a bulwark against the white men's invasion. Our progress westward has become bounded by the waters of the ocean.

These reflections cannot help but impress upon us the importance of collecting and preserving all that can be



obtained relating to the history of a past which can never be repeated. The value of all the society now possesses will be enhanced many fold as the years more widely separate that past from the future. The white men are confronted with a conjectural problem of the future. We read in history's pages of the glories of ancient Greece, but we see her only in ruins. We read of the grandeur of Rome, but we see her in decay. If we would go back to more antecedent days we find evidences of civilization only by excavations of the remains of buried cities. Here on this continent we have seen another race, that has been the proud possessor of these lands for centuries, disappear. The red men were not able to maintain the supremacy of their race nor the lands of their birthright. When we look back over our past faded glory and departed grandeur we may well ask ourselves, "Will the white man be able to preserve his present high standard of civilization and progress and prosperity?"

If he is to do so, he should preserve the history of the extinct race that dwelt on the American soil, just as he should preserve the history of his own past; for out of these he may gather the lessons of wisdom that will give him the essential promptings for his own preservation. This, in part, is the mission of the Nebraska State Historical Society.

The Indian collections of the historical society will continue to become more valuable as antiquities. They will become more priceless than the mummies of Pharaohs, or the hieroglyphics from the Nile. They will become more interesting than the groves and temples of the Druids, the wonderworkers of the ancient Celts. This collection is all we have left to tell the story of the life of a human race that has been swept away by an all powerful and conquering white man. To them the heavens have been rolled away as a scroll. To them the moon and stars have gone back into utter darkness.

Putting all other considerations aside, the people of Nebraska, in this the age of their strong manhood and unrestrained prosperity, can do a no more commendable or worthy thing than to appropriate a part of their revenues for the preservation and housing of these valuable collections of the historical society.

## ADVENTURES ON THE PLAINS, 1865-67

BY DENNIS FARRELL

I was a little over twenty-two years of age when I reached Leavenworth, Kansas, with the full intention of crossing the plains to California. I was slight of build but large in ambition, and, while I am not brave, I dared to go anywhere I felt like going. I was out to rough it, and hired to the government as one to help take six hundred head of horses to the different military posts between Leavenworth and Fort Laramie. We started on the 30th of April, 1865. There was a long rope fastened to the tongue of a wagon and stretching forward, and to this rope were tied one hundred horses by their bridles, with five men riders, one at the head of the line, three in the swings, and one on the wheel horse.

Our trip was uneventful until we passed Fort Kearny. It was our custom to drive until about noon or later, and then, in order to give the horses water, an hour or two of rest and a chance to feed, we picketed them out. We used iron picket pins, a foot and a half long, driven well into the ground, and fifty feet of rope. Some of the men were always out among the horses to prevent them from tangling or being thrown by the ropes. About two days after we left Fort Kearny, suddenly the horses became excited and turned their ears toward the bluffs across the river where Indians were waving their red blankets and yelling their war cry at the top of their voices. The horses stampeded—I was in the midst of them and picket pins flying in the air—and ran toward the bluffs on our side of the river. Many of them were killed and many others so badly maimed



that they had to be shot. Our military escort of cavalrymen and some of our own men followed, but failed to recover a large number of them. At the first alarm some one yelled, "Lie on your face!" and so I did, expecting every instant to be crushed by the horses or killed by flying picket pins. This was the only incident of note until we reached Julesburg, as Fort Sedgwick was then called, and I stopped at this place. The string of horses with which I was detailed was turned over to the commandant of that post.

I found employment in the quartermaster's department under Captain Westbrook. In the fall I left the government employ and bought out old Sam Watt's interest in the eating house which was a part of the ranch he kept in the military camp at Julesburg. Sam Watt was also postmaster. He was a Missourian, about fifty years old, and well posted on frontier life. He was about fifty years of age then; he told me about the old Frenchman, Jules, and how he was attacked and killed by the Indians and the ranch set on fire. Old Jules' ranch was about a mile and a half below or east of the fort proper, but inside of the four-miles circuit. The story of the cattlemen wearing his ears as watch guards is manufactured out of whole cloth, as there were no cattlemen on the plains at that time; there were nothing but bull-whackers, wagon-masters or mule-drivers. Sam Watt knew Jules personally, and I regret that I cannot recall, at this interesting period, some of the things he told me. In reading "The Great Salt Lake Trail" I find illustrations<sup>1</sup> purporting to be Old Julesburg

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<sup>1</sup> Fort Sedgwick was established May 19, 1864, as Camp Rankin, but was not constructed until September of that year when, on the 27th, it was christened Fort Sedgwick by the war department. The post was situated on the south side of the South Platte river, about a mile west of Julesburg. In 1867 the name was transferred to the station on the Union Pacific railroad situated, not opposite old Julesburg, but a little more than three miles farther east and on the north side of the river.

when, in fact, they are a picture of Jack Hughes' (of the firm of Hughes & Bissell of Denver) Julesburg of 1865 and 1866. Hughes had a contract with the government to furnish so many hundred cords of wood. Old Julesburg did not have any frame houses, but one can see in the picture two of the old adobe houses. Old Julesburg was on the south side of the Platte, and when the railroad builders reached a point opposite with their track, they called their town New Julesburg, and, in order to sell lots, they advertised the great improvements they were going to make there at once.

Captain Westbrook, quartermaster of the post, was a Californian. He was succeeded by Captain Neill, a West Point soldier from Pennsylvania.

While keeping this eating place at the fort, I boarded some of the officers and occasionally served transient meals

Lieutenant General William T. Sherman, writing from Fort Laramie, August 31, 1866, said that Fort Sedgwick "is sometimes called Julesburg, by reason of a few adobe houses called by that name, three miles from the post." (House Executive Documents 39th Congress, 2d Session, v. 6, doc. 23, p. 9.) This statement indicates that the site of old Julesburg had been abandoned and the name applied to the place which became a station on the Union Pacific railroad the next year.

The first buildings for Fort Sedgwick were constructed of sod by Company F of the Seventh Iowa regiment, under Captain Nicholas J. O'Brien. Captain P. W. Neill was of the Eighteenth U. S. infantry, then in the Division of the Missouri, and the next year, under the reorganization, in the Department of the Platte. Captain Eugene F. Ware describes the manner of constructing the first buildings in his *History of the Indian War of 1864*, page 326. Lieutenant General William T. Sherman, writing from Fort Sedgwick, August 24, 1866, said: "The post was first built of sod, and now looks like hovels in which a negro would not go". (House Executive Documents 39th Congress, 2d Session, p. 6.)

Jules was not killed by Indians, but by Jack Slade, a desperado, at his ranch near O'Fallon's Bluff. It is said that Slade shot off one of Jules's ears and wore it as a memento. This brutal incident is related in detail in the history of Nebraska, volume 2, page 180, note; and in "The Great Salt Lake Trail", p. 205. The pictures alluded to by Mr. Farrell are in the book last named, page 162. Captain Royal L. Westbrook was in the volunteer service. He was appointed assistant quartermaster from California in 1863. It does not appear that Captain Neill was in the quartermaster service.—ED.

to the passengers in the overland stages at two dollars per meal. This would seem high, but flour cost twenty-five dollars for a fifty-pound bag, and other necessities were equally high. I remember the battle with the Indians nine miles west of the fort, near Ackerly's ranch. Two women were brought to the fort and placed in the hospital tent, where they were cared for. It was said one woman was scalped, and whether they lived or died I cannot say, but the reports of the hospital would show. I remember that one morning, about ten o'clock, the Indians made a great dash through the grounds of the fort, below on the Platte river; and for a time all was excitement with rumors that the fort was attacked.

New rules were made at the fort that no private business should be carried on within the four-miles limit; therefore old Sam Watt, myself and others had to go. The reason for this was that Adams, Green & Co. became the sutlers at the fort. That was in the summer of 1866.

While at the fort I built a ranch on the main road to Fort Laramie, twenty-two miles up Lodgepole Creek. This ranch was on the west side of the valley and close to a dry creek, that in the spring used to fill up and become a large stream. It drained a large valley directly back of my ranch in a northwesterly direction and nearly at right angles to Lodgepole Creek valley. Here the history of my settlement, or intended settlement in Nebraska begins. By some my ranch was called "Farrell's Ranch" and by others the "Twenty-two Mile Ranch". Most of the time at the ranch life was monotonous; then, again, wagon trains used to stop there and make things quite lively. This section of your state at that time had few ranchmen and no settlers. In the first place, the Indians would make it too uncomfortable for anyone who tried to make a home there, as the Cheyenne wanted it for their hunting grounds, and it was pretty good for that use at that time. They had to go only



ten miles east or west to find plenty of antelopes and buffaloes. Farther northeast[?], toward Cheyenne, in the timber section, there were deer and moose. At the ranch we had no trouble in getting antelopes, as they used to show themselves on the bluffs on either side of the valley.

One afternoon, about the last of August, 1866, I was riding on an Indian pony from my ranch to Julesburg. At a point about nine miles from Julesburg, as it was getting dark, I was traveling south, the creek at my left and the bluffs at my right, when suddenly my pony's head turned west toward the bluffs and his ears shot backward and forward very excitedly. He kept this up for quite a while and then began to increase his speed and tried to leave the road, making toward the bluffs. I looked in the direction that he was trying to go and saw what I thought was a band of Indians looming up on the crest of the bluff and riding parallel to my course, in the same direction. It seemed to me a race for life, and I desperately dug the spurs into the pony's flanks. I had a great struggle to keep him on the road. He seemed to want to go to the Indians, as I supposed because he was a real Indian pony. Soon my Indians left the bluffs and were heading me off, still gaining on me and getting closer to the road. I had hoped to beat them, but it was of no use. I then began to think of turning back as there seemed to be about a mile between us; just at this time they had reached the road and were crossing it and to my great relief and astonishment I discovered they were a herd of antelopes going down to the creek to water. I was almost paralyzed from excitement and exhaustion.

There were three ranches between Julesburg and the divide—the point where the road left Lodgepole Creek and turned north toward the Platte or Mud Springs; there was one ranch at Mud Springs. The first ranch was twelve miles from Julesburg. It was a temporary affair, made of

lumber, and did not last long. I cannot recall the ranchman's name. My ranch was next, twenty-two miles from Julesburg; the next fifteen miles farther on, and Mud Springs was next to that. The ranch next beyond mine was kept by a Frenchman named Louis Rouillet (?) and Jim Pringle. They did a very large business. They afterward left the ranch and moved to Sidney Station, on the Union Pacific railroad, situated a few miles up the valley. The ranch at Mud Springs was kept by a man named James McArdle, who did a very good business. The last time I saw him he was starting for Texas.

My ranch was built of sod. It was about 15x18 feet, and the walls were three feet thick. It had a rear and a front door and three windows, one on either side of the front door and the other on the south side, looking down the road. These windows were built like portholes, bevelled off on two sides and bottom, and each had two small panes of glass. I had heavy double battened doors, and the roof was of sod laid on poles. I began an addition to the ranch house, in the rear, which I never finished, but used it as a stable for my mules and ponies. On my way from California, twenty-four years ago, from the car windows I saw the walls of the ranch still standing. My two brothers lived with me at the ranch. I had quite a number of men working for me from time to time, making hay in summer and cutting wood in winter. I remember that the names of four of them were, Dickenson, Wiley, Tibbets, and Walden, but always called "blueskin". He was about sixty-five years of age. He drove a stage to and from Chillicothe, Ohio, before there were any railroads at that town. Tobacco juice was always running down his protruding chin. He was a peculiar character and chewed and swore by note. I also had a colored man, Dick Turner, who was very faithful and trustworthy. He went west

with Captain Greene to Fort Laramie and was on his way back to the states when I got him.

In the summer of 1866 I cut and put up about twenty tons of hay. It was not of a very good quality. Some of it I used myself and some of it I sold, but most of it was overrun by freighters' cattle in the storms of the winter of 1866-67; some of the wagon masters would pay me a little for the hay they took and others nothing. There was an officer at the fort who, while he was supposed to be giving all his time to the government, did a little private business with a cattle train. I will not mention his name. His cattle not only used my hay in a big storm, in March, 1867, but destroyed what might have been used by myself; his wagon master gave me a receipt for the hay, but the gallant officer refused to pay. I brought suit in Julesburg, catching him over from the fort with his light wagon and tried to put a lien on it, but the lawyers discovered that there was no jurisdiction in such cases in that part of the territory, so I lost the claim. I mention this to show what law-abiding citizens there were in those good old days. In 1867 I cut and put up about fifty tons of hay and put it in two ricks, one of thirty, and the other of twenty tons. The larger rick was burned.

In the summer of 1867, the men were making hay on the west side of the creek when the Indians made a dash down on them, but as the Indians had been seen before they left the bluffs and were delayed by high water in the creek, the men got away safely.

Another day Dick, the colored man, was down fishing and before he discovered them the Indians were almost upon him, but on the other side of the creek. He ran so fast to the ranch that he dropped at the door and could hardly speak. Dick's steel trap down at the creek caught an otter by the hind leg and he would not be led or driven.



Every time Dick pulled him the otter made a dive for Dick and they kept up the game until they got to the ranch, and it seemed as though Dick was the worst used up of the two.

We caught a coyote in the trap, and we thought we could tame him. We had made a house for him, but after keeping him several months we found he was just as wild as the day we caught him, so let him go. I got up one morning, early, as we had been annoyed all night by coyotes; we thought there were about a thousand of them, but, to our surprise, I found only two or three. I shot at them with my old musket, wounding one of them so badly that he had to drag his hind legs after him. He started to run up the cañon, and, thinking that a blow of the gun would kill him, I followed him nearly a mile as fast as I could run when he stopped and faced around to fight me. I was so exhausted that I could not raise my gun, so I made up my mind to let him go.

I was attacked several times by the Indians, usually very early in the morning. According to the New York *Herald* "the Farrell Ranch was burned and they were killed and scalped". I came very near being killed one day while alone at the ranch. A half dozen Cheyenne, led by Chief White Eye, marched in without ceremony. They were somewhat friendly at first. The chief sat on the counter near a show case and demanded sugar and coffee and a silk handkerchief and other trinkets, and I got a pair of moccasins in exchange. The others wanted whisky. I had a loaded gun outside the counter, and one of the Indians picked it up and pointed it at me; but I lifted the lid of the counter and went out and took the gun from him, which made him very angry. Another of them caught a mouse and brought it over and put it under my nose, ordering me in broken English to eat it. By this time they were getting very ugly and demanded whisky. Two of

them started out of the back door to look around. I reached behind the counter and picked up my sixteen-shooter Henry rifle and leveled it at the fellow who put the mouse under my nose. He backed out of the door, and then I waved the chief to go after him. After a good deal of grunting he left. When outside, they mounted, yelled, shot at the ranch, whooped and rode away.

Generals Sherman and Myers, while on their way to Fort Laramie (I cannot remember the date)<sup>2</sup> went into camp just north of the ranch. General Sherman came to the ranch with his quartermaster and asked me if he could see the proprietor. I said, "You want to see me, General?" "No", he said, "I don't want to see you, I want to see the proprietor of the ranch". "But", I said, "I own this ranch". "You!" he said, "You! Why where did you come from?" I said, "I came from New York". "What, a New York boy out here keeping a ranch! Well! Well!" He got what he wanted.

I had fifty cords of wood cut at Lawrence's Fork the winter of 1866-67 and when attempting to haul some of it my two hundred dollar mule was taken by the Indians (?) I suspect they were white Indians in uniform going to Fort Laramie. As the driver heard that the Indians were coming, he took to a place of safety and when he came out

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<sup>2</sup> General Sherman started from Fort Sedgwick to Fort Laramie on the 25th of August, 1866, and, at the rate he traveled, must have passed Farrell's ranch that day. (House Executive Documents, 39th Congress, 2d Session, Doc. 23, p. 7.) Brevet Brigadier General William Myers, was quartermaster of the department of the Platte.

A letter from the war department to the editor, under date of January 19, 1914, says:

"It does not appear from the records of this office that any of the companies of either the 13th or 18th regiment United States infantry, was stationed at Fort Sedgwick, Colorado, during any part of the year 1865, nor does it appear that Captain P. W. Neill, 18th Infantry, or that an officer named Royal L. Westbrook, was stationed at that fort in that year. Royal L. Westbrook was not an officer in the Regular Army. Nothing has been found of record to show for whom the fort referred to was first named."—ED.

he found the mule had been unhitched, and afterwards he learned that some of Uncle Sam's Indians had passed.

I do not now recall the exact date of the Plum Creek massacre<sup>3</sup> when they scalped Mr. Thompson, who, a few years ago sent his dried scalp from Australia to your society. A story of this incident in the New York *Herald*, copied from a paper in your city, recalled it to my mind, and I wrote to the editor of the Lincoln paper to strengthen the accuracy of the account, as I was on the train on which this man was taken to Omaha. I was permitted, with a few others, to go into the car where he lay. The man in charge of him raised a cloth from his head and allowed us to look at it. He lay motionless, as though dead, and I was always under the impression that he was dead until I read the *Herald's* article. I was on my way to Omaha to buy goods for my ranch. I dealt with Will R. King & Co., large wholesale merchants. The ranchmen from Mud Springs went down a few days ahead of me. We had our goods shipped to the end of the Union Pacific railroad, and there we loaded our teams. We traveled up the north side of the South Platte, but waited long enough to get a number of teams together to form a corral, as the Indians were ugly at that time. At the end of the second day's drive we went into camp, forming a close corral. Everything was very quiet, we had finished our supper and it was growing dark when, suddenly, the horses began to be very restless,

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<sup>3</sup> "Plum Creek Massacre" should be confined to the tragedy near Plum Creek station which was an incident of the Indian outbreak of August 7, 1864. This station was on the old Oregon and California road, about a mile west of the mouth of the creek. It is said that eleven emigrants were massacred there. On the seventh of August, 1867, Indians attacked a freight train on the Union Pacific railroad, about six miles west of the new Plum Creek station, now called Lexington. This station is situated about three miles west and six miles north of the old station and on the opposite—north—side of the Platte river. According to contemporary reports, the Indians killed four men and destroyed ten cars and their contents. Thompson's scalp was deposited in the Omaha public library.

—Ed.



then to strain at their halters. We looked in the same direction they did and saw a band of Indians dashing down from the bluffs, waving red blankets and yelling as loud as they could. It seemed not more than five minutes before they were upon us. We grabbed our guns and rushed for cover—some into, and others under the wagons. The Indians dropped onto the off side of their ponies and rode so fast that it was next to impossible for us to hit them. They answered our fire mostly with bow and arrow. After a while, when it was quite dark, they rode away, as, probably, they were uncertain of our numbers. They scared us badly, for we thought they were some of the same band that committed the massacre at Plum Creek.

When the Union Pacific road reached Julesburg the camp followers moved up with it and the bad element was increased by others of the same kind from below. The town was filled with gambling houses, and tough men and women from "Bitter Creek", as they used to say.

At one time a telegraph operator sent up a notice from Julesburg that he and his friends were coming up to the ranch to clean me out, but they failed to come. At another time a young Pennsylvanian became crazed with Julesburg liquor and when he reached the ranch he wanted to run everybody and everything. I objected to the new manager, and then he grabbed the weights from the counter and let them fly at me, one after another. He next pulled a little pocket revolver, rushed at me and pressed it against my forehead; but just at that moment some one struck him and he fell to the floor, and then some of his friends took him out of the ranch.

These were some of the little pleasantries of frontier ranching.

In the fall of 1867, having left the ranch for lack of business, I moved down near the creek and near the hay which I afterwards sold at twelve dollars a ton to Captain

O'Brien. From there I moved to the Black Hills, between Laramie City and Cheyenne, where I stayed all winter. This ended my stay in Nebraska. I tried to file a government claim to the land on the bottom in front of the ranch, but it was only a squatter's right, and I never went any further in the matter.

I served in the army from 1861 to 1863.

## AN INDIAN RAID OF 1867

BY JOHN R. CAMPBELL

On the 24th of August, 1865, Peter Campbell with his wife, four daughters and three sons sailed from Glasgow, Scotland, on the steamship St. George for the purpose of settling in the United States. Their home had been in the hamlet of Lochgelly in the county of Fife. Mr. Campbell's aged father and other members of his family had already emigrated to this country. The Campbell family landed at Quebec, Canada, after an uneventful voyage of thirteen days. Travel by railroad was so much slower then than now that it seemed ages before they arrived at St. Joseph, Mo., then the farthest western limit of any railway. From that place they traveled by steamboat to Nebraska City. The water being low in the Missouri, the journey required eight days. Nebraska City being then a crowded outfitting place for a great deal of the westward overland travel, Mr. Campbell could not find suitable accommodations for the family; but the dauntless Scot spirit rose to the emergency, and the man with his wife and seven children proceeded to occupy a vacant lot with nothing to protect them from sun, wind, or rain; and their first scanty meal on Nebraska soil was procured here and there as they could buy it. They paid five cents a quart for water and for other things in proportion. But a kind brother Scotchman took them into his home. In a week's time the emigrants again started westward in a two-horse wagon. After ten or twelve weary days they arrived at Junctionville, situated near the place where Doniphan, Hall county, was afterward built.



Mr. Campbell's first care was to provide shelter for his family, as winter was approaching, and soon a log house, roofed with sod and chinked with mud, was ready for occupancy. In the middle of the unusually long, cold winter Mrs. Campbell succumbed to hardship, dying in January, 1866. The husband and children tenderly buried her in a rude, unpainted coffin in a lonely wilderness grave. In the spring of 1867 Mr. Campbell went to Nebraska City where he filed a homestead claim and declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States. He brought back in his wagon groceries and household goods. Their crops of corn, oats, wheat and vegetables were very good that season and a ready market at good prices was found for their surplus. There were then less than a dozen settlers up and down the valley a distance of ten miles from the Campbell place.

On the twenty-fourth of July, 1867, Mr. Campbell and his oldest son, a lad of fourteen, went to assist a farmer six miles away at his harvest which began that day. About three o'clock in the afternoon a horseman approached the harvesters at full speed to tell them that Indians were raiding the settlement. Mr. Campbell and his son at once mounted a horse and started for their home. They first came to a neighbor's house, about a quarter of a mile from their own, where they found the mother of the family lying dead on the threshold of the door, clasping her infant son in her arms; and nearby a son, fourteen years of age, lay shot through the thigh.

They found their own home robbed and destroyed and all the family missing except a girl nine years old, who had managed to elude the Indians by hiding in a field of grain and then crawling for a quarter of a mile to get out of sight and afterward running four miles to notify the neighbor who rode to give the terrible news to Mr. Campbell, as already related. A search for the missing children—

two daughters and the two youngest sons—was at once organized. The settlers, convinced that the single company of soldiers at Fort Kearny<sup>1</sup> could not afford them protection, decided to abandon their homes and by evening of the next day the reduced Campbell family, now comprising only the father and one son and the grandfather and a brother, were the only inhabitants left in the neighborhood. In about a week Captain Wyman with a detail of six soldiers from Fort Kearny joined in the search for the missing children, exploring the country for a distance of twenty-five miles southward but without success.

At last, about the 20th of September, news came through the little settlement at Grand Island that the prisoners had been seen at a camp of a band of Oglala Sioux on the Solomon river. It was rumored also that government authorities were treating with these Indians for the purpose of recovering the prisoners. Soon after [September 25] a communication appeared in the *Omaha Republican*, as I remember it, substantially as follows:

*“Dear Republican:*

Here we are again in the place noted in bygone days as the city of the plains, but which now looks more like an Indian reservation. Leaving Omaha at 6 p. m. nothing worthy of note transpired until we reached Elm Creek. Here we were aroused by the whistle down brakes repeated several times. “Indians! Indians!” was repeated in every car. Guns and revolvers were soon ready for action but upon closer inquiry the cause of the alarm proved to be another train on the track ahead of us showing a red flag. Antelopes and buffaloes were seen at a distance, but too

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<sup>1</sup> According to the report of Lieutenant-General W. T. Sherman, commander of the Military Division of the Missouri, dated October 1 1867, there was only “a detachment of recruits” at Fort Kearny; and, according to the report of the adjutant general, dated October 20, the garrison then consisted of two companies of the Thirtieth infantry—seventy-two men—commanded by Captain (Brevet-Major) A. J. Dallas of the Twelfth infantry. (Report Secy. of War, 2d Sess., 40th Cong., pp. 40, 436.)—ED.

far for a try of our Henry rifles. We reached North Platte in safety and were informed that the peace commissioners would be there and that Spotted Tail's band would arrive some time that day.<sup>2</sup> The commission arrived at 2:10 p. m. and the Indians at 7:30. By the aid of our glasses we discovered them as they crossed the river. Soon there was a general rush to the camp, by men, women and children, to greet the brave soldiers who had been so successful in rescuing six captives out of the hands of the barbarous wretches."

Four of the prisoners proved to be the Campbell children. They had suffered greatly from hunger and general ill treatment. In the early spring of 1868 the Campbell family abandoned their homestead and moved to Saunders county, Nebraska.

Little more need be said—only a few lines in regard to the survivors. The father died in November 1875. Christiana, the oldest daughter, became the wife of J. P. Dunlap of Dwight, Nebraska. Jessie, the next oldest, died in St. Louis ten years ago. Agnes, the nine year old daughter who escaped from the Indians, died nine years ago. Peter, one of the boys, is now living at Weston, Nebraska, and Daniel, the other, is living in southern Illinois. John R., the oldest son of the family, is at present living in Omaha. Lizzie, the youngest daughter, died six years ago.

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<sup>2</sup> This peace commission was appointed by the president of the United States, July 20, 1867, and consisted of N. G. Taylor, commissioner of Indian affairs; J. B. Henderson, chairman of the senate committee of Indian affairs; S. F. Tappan, John B. Sanborn, and Generals W. T. Sherman, W. S. Harney, C. C. Augur, A. H. Terry. According to the report of the commission, printed in the report of the secretary of the interior, 3d session 40th congress, page 486, it left Omaha on the 11th of September, 1867, bound for North Platte by the Union Pacific railroad.—Ed.



## HOW SHALL THE INDIAN BE TREATED HISTORICALLY

BY HARRY L. KEEFE

[Read at the annual meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society,  
January 16, 1913.]

Among the many duties and responsibilities of the American people there is none more vital or far-reaching in scope and effect, than the obligation to fix and preserve the true relative and historical position of the American Indian. We do not realize the extent of the influence of this race on American life, socially, intellectually, economically and spiritually, until we consider its varied manifestations. Hardly a home in our land is without some specimen of Indian craft. Our language is interwoven with Indian conception, expressed in native phrase. Nearly every geographical feature and political division are stamped with an Indian name or tradition. Our literature is blended with Indian tales and stories of Indian life, from *The Pathfinder* to *My Friend, the Indian*. Operas and plays portraying Indian character and Indian songs and harmony at the outset gained and continue to hold our favor. In the process of the settlement of our country Indians guided the white man across the pathless prairies and through the wilderness, in many instances without remuneration. Many more of the early white settlers would have perished but for the timely aid of the Indians. The corn furnished by the Indians kept the pilgrims of Plymouth alive through a severe winter. Raleigh's little band of settlers at Roanoke would have perished lacking provisions furnished by the natives. The Jamestown colony obtained

corn and other articles of food and knowledge of its cultivation of Powhatan's band. The Plymouth colony was assisted in like manner by the Narragansetts. From Indians pioneer whites learned to girdle trees and make clearings for crops which were new to them. Colonies from the principal nations of Europe, otherwise well equipped, were yet largely dependent upon guidance by the natives who were skilled in utilizing the resources of the country. They adopted the Indian mode of travel, and the Indian system of flashes and signal fires was adopted and adapted by the white invaders.

In fact, the white people came to America and complacently possessed themselves of American soil for a pittance, sweeping aside any vestige of prior sovereignty; disregarding vested rights of possession, they destroyed the resources that had immemorially maintained these people, leaving them to live their former primitive life only in literature, song, and tradition. The only argument which has been used to justify the ruthless spoliation of these weaker people is that they were thereby civilized and their condition bettered. The weakness of this argument, for justification's sake, lies in this: The white people, the interested party, thus sets itself up as the judge of what was best for the Indians, assuming that a white civilization was his salvation.

After fifteen years of professional life on an Indian reservation, bringing me in touch with a number of tribes, I have naturally given considerable study and thought to the status of these people and have considered what they have lost and what they have gained by the revolutionary change in their environment. I have endeavored to consider these changes from the standpoint of Indian philosophy and logic, and I have concluded that by far the greatest loss which the Indian has sustained is that of the right to develop, in his own way, a civilization fitted to himself.

This right, I believe, belongs to every people. A race occupying a defined territory and free from outside interference, is bound in time to develop a civilization of its own, formed in a great measure by surrounding physical conditions. That civilization may not be the best, judged by the standards of another people; but it is the best for the man who, through heredity and environment, is its product and type.

Now, is not the American Indian, who has given and sacrificed so much to life in our land, entitled to have preserved his true place in the history of the American people, which is in the making? While not criticising historical research which has accomplished a great deal, still there has not been due effort by those having the passing facts close at hand to reach and record the full data of our Indian character and life so that in the future the Indian may be seen as he was.

In 1900 there were 270,544 Indians enumerated in the United States; in 1911, 322,715. This does not certainly show an increase of 52,000, because the difference may be accounted for in part by more careful enumeration. There has, however, been an actual increase in the past ten years, and possibly the increase will continue. Indians will never be separately enumerated again by the census bureau. Their tribal relations are rapidly passing, and in a few years they will pass entirely out of the influence of their former communistic life and assume individual responsibility. Very few white people realize the meaning of the change, in a single generation, from tribal, communistic Indian life to the white men's civilization, with radically different property rights and other social relations—in short, different philosophy of life. Not realizing his drawbacks, we become impatient because the Indian does not at once assume the new role and become fired with our own ambitions and desires. The development



and civilization he had attained in his centuries of free life were fastened upon him, as similar characteristics became fastened upon the white race. Ought the Indian to be expected to drop in one short generation the influences of heredity and environment, as the snake sheds its skin, and at once assume all of the qualities of an alien civilization?

Ten years, at the utmost, will see the passing of the last Indian who came to manhood in the purely primitive Indian life, and with him will pass many of the traditions of that life. Unless steps are taken now to preserve these traditions, they will be forever lost. Does not the great, rich state of Nebraska, which took its name, the name of its streams, the name of its metropolitan city, and so much more from this vanishing race owe some duty in the preservation of its character and traditions? I do not mean that nothing has been done; but what has been accomplished is the result of the unsupported enthusiasm of a few individuals. I am asking for a carefully planned, thoroughly executed system of research and conservation which will coöperate with the efforts made by the federal government through the Smithsonian institution, in placing Indian history in Nebraska in the position which it should occupy.

By Indian history I do not mean merely a chronological account of the tribal movements, hunting trips, festivities and other incidents of these people, but a fuller and truer reflection of the everyday life of this race in its primitive station and up to the time that it began to be influenced by the white people, so that future citizens of Nebraska may see these early inhabitants of our territory in their everyday life as they came into the world, as the children played and were trained, as the people built houses and raised crops, clothed themselves, prepared for winter, protected their families, and as they loved their neighbor and worshipped their God. Let us see them not alone on

parade and in powwow dress and feathers, but let us observe their life, for 365 days in the year 1800.

Now this is not an easy task. It is hard to get through the Indian's shell. He is reticent, unpretentious. He cares nothing for our conventionalities. The most treasured memories I have of these people are of occasions when I have come close to individuals in their private personal and domestic affairs when they have talked to me freely of the white man and his ways and of the Indian and the "Indian way". Those are the little glimpses, the little incidents which bridge across the chasm between the races.

People may live among the Indians for a lifetime and see the outward signs of their manners and customs and know nothing of the true, rich inwardness and the beauty and meaning of those things that appear to us meaningless. Many think that by assuming the white civilization, cruelly thrust upon them, the Indians were the beneficiaries, giving up nothing worth while, and falling heirs to the great blessing of citizenship and all of the other trappings of civilization. Such a view is hardly correct from the standpoint of the Indian. He had a means of livelihood in his primitive condition sufficient for that condition. He had a well defined attitude toward his neighbor. He was circumscribed by laws as well understood and as efficient for him as our own are for us. He had a philosophy intricate and deep, a religion which satisfied the craving of the spirit; in short, he had surrounded himself with all of the means and equipment necessary to his well-being in that state of life. It required but the influences of a fixed habitation, the division of labor, competition, and an increased congestion of life to develop the true Indian civilization. The fixed habitation had been realized by many tribes. The cultivation of the soil was well developed, and the Indian was well on the way to his own development of a civilization when the white man came and changed the map.

I am sorry that time will not permit me to discuss Indian industries and art and go into a better description of his products. He raised and developed six varieties of corn. He cured and preserved his meats. He planted, cultivated, gathered and preserved his potatoes, turnips, squash, berries and nuts. The Indian had a good knowledge of the medicinal qualities of many plants and applied them to human ailments very effectively, with little more necromancy than many of the white doctors now practice. But all of these subjects must be left to the historian.

In 1847, at a meeting of the New York Historical Society, Peter Wilson, a Cayuga Indian, said: "The Empire State, as you love to call it, was once laced by our trails from Albany to Buffalo. Your roads still traverse the same lines of communication which bound one part of the Long House to the other. Have we, the first holders of this prosperous region, no longer a share in your history?"

I believe you will all agree with me that the Indians of Nebraska have a large share in our history and more than has been so far recognized.

No person realizes more than I do the many obstacles besetting the work of the investigator in these lines. Besides the reticence of the Indian, there is the difficulty of finding the person properly prepared and equipped who will give the time, care and patience to the work, who can lay aside sentiment, curiosity, and prejudice, who has the judgment to distinguish between essentials and non-essentials and to avoid tangents, and who is broad enough to grasp the whole scope, meaning, and import of Indian manners and customs and give them their true interpretation. He must be able to get the confidence of the older Indians. This you cannot buy. He must also be able to discount poor interpretation. He must abandon our intricate and extended method of many words and ask his questions candidly and directly. He must learn the Indian order of



expression. In other words, he must be a trained and experienced sociologist and know Indian life. He must be equipped with the best facilities for recording, and he must be a true historian. Now where is the man and from whence will come the support? The labor is hard, but the reward is great.

I shall feel well repaid if this paper accomplishes no more than to create enough interest to open the eyes of the members of this society to our duty to the Indians, historically, and the opportunity now open, but passing, to perform that duty. If this interest is awakened, I know that action will be taken and Nebraska will not forget her namesake, and that Omaha will do her duty towards the people who gave her their land and their name.

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Continuing extemporaneously Mr. Keefe said: One of the most beautiful things in the Indian philosophy is his idea of the ownership of property. It was that the elements consisting of air, water, and land belong to all men; that every person has a right to take possession of so much of that air, so much of that water, and that land as he needs for his sustenance, and as long as he possesses them, or as long as he lives, he uses them for himself, but the moment he passes on, they go back to the community.

That is the idea in a few words. The Indian is communistic, in a sense. He claims he has a right to hold his land or sell it if he wishes to. When he sells a piece of land and spends the proceeds of it, he does so just as freely with the last dollar as with the first. We blame him for it. Go back fifty years, and what did his father or his forefathers do? How did they live? What was their idea of land? It goes back to the communistic value. It is of no value to him except as he lives upon it, uses it, and occupies it.

The Indian does not come into this life as you and I came in with generations and generations of people behind us. That love for the individual holding, with the idea of value, of a piece of land that you and I have, is not inbred in him. He loves his home just as much as anyone does, but without the idea of a homestead that is bred by generations into the Anglo-Saxon race. I have heard lots of people criticise Indians and say, "Why, just look at them! they sell the very last piece of land they have and buy horses!" And that is true. When they have enough horses they will buy more, and when they have bought them, they will borrow more money and buy more horses; that is traditional. The horse was the standard of value fifty or seventy-five years ago among them. The horse was their dollar of money. Do you wonder then at this prepossession?

We are wont to look at the Indian as if he were on parade. We see him or his father as a show Indian, which he is not. I remember many incidents that led me to this belief. Lately it was my privilege to appear in a case in court, known as the "Standing Bear" case from the Ponka reservation, which had been pending for four years. Standing Bear, as many of you know, was a Ponka chief. This case was the subject of considerable litigation, over the question of citizenship, in the federal court in Omaha. By the way, the president of this association appeared in the case as a defender of Standing Bear, but that was before I came to Nebraska. But Standing Bear did as all other good Indians did—left a family, and there has been some litigation over his estate.

The testimony of one of his witnesses, known as Yellow Horse, a very careful old man about his statements, was taken at Niobrara about a year ago. The old man was sitting in the room where the evidence was being taken. A question was raised as to the age of a certain

child at a certain time. You know with an Indian you can not say, referring to the year 1904 or 1905, such things were true. You must go back and say, "At the time the stars fell, then the Ponka were at such and such a place, were they?" Answer, "Yes, sir". "Very well, when they camped at such and such a creek (knowing what those days were) then was this boy living?"

That is the way you have to bring out Indian testimony. I asked old Yellow Horse, who was watching the proceedings, the age of this boy at a certain time. They never put their hands this way (indicating). I said, "The boy was seven years old, was he"; and he said, "No". I said, "Was he six years old"; and he said, "No". Well, was he five years old and he answered, "No"; and so I went on down to three years, and Yellow Horse did not believe the child was three years old. I said to him, "Give us the age or size of the boy, and he held up his hands this way (indicating). I said, "Just hold them there", and went over and put my hands up and marked it about like that. Then I stepped back and said, "You say the boy was that tall at that time"? Old Yellow Horse looked at me and he said to the interpreter, "Oh, I thought I was sitting on the ground". He was sitting on the ground at the time he had referred to. He was sitting on the ground in the tepee and did not realize he was that much above the ground at the time he was being examined.

There are dozens and dozens of those incidents occurring every day that bring a person in close touch with the simplicity of these people and at the same time with their truths.

One night at ten o'clock, about four years ago, I was called up by telephone by a friend of mine on the reservation. He said that an Indian boy by the name of William Cox had shot himself. The person telephoning was a young Indian woman, and she asked me to come over. She said



this boy had been living with his grandmother, and she wanted me to come and bring a doctor. I went over with the doctor. The boy had killed himself and none of them had been anywhere near the corpse. By the way, he had been somewhat demented for years. It was the most weird thing I ever saw. The night was dark, with thunder and lightning, and we could hardly find our way with the rain falling.

When we got where the boy was we found him in a little opening among some trees. He had shot himself with a shotgun, but none of the people had been anywhere near him. I assisted in getting the corpse into a room and helped prepare it for burial. We did this because the Indians are very careful about touching a dead body. I noticed they were especially careful in this case. This doctor, by the way, had some Indian blood. Just before I left and before locking the room, a very old lady came into the room with a blanket around her and, for the first time, approached the corpse, went to the feet, and lifting the sheet over the corpse did something. I did not show my curiosity but waited until she was gone out of the room; then I looked to see what she had done, and I found that with a butcher knife she had slashed the feet of the dead body several times. I said nothing about it at the time. The doctor saw what had taken place. On our way home I asked the doctor what that meant, and she told me that this was the second instance of a suicide in the Omaha tribe in almost a generation. She said there is a tradition among the Indians that when a person takes his own life his spirit will return, and if the corpse is buried either with the face down, so that it cannot return, or the feet are slashed, so that the walking will be difficult, the spirit may not come back. I intended speaking something of Indian philosophy, but I want to say a word now concerning Indian literature. I believe that is one of the things we regret

the most to see pass away unrecorded—Indian eloquence and Indian literature. I think the most touching thing I ever heard was an old man speaking at a funeral. At such times it is customary for one of the oldest men to address the audience or mourners. This was a wrinkled old man, always considered simple, of little or no business judgment, and who had always appeared to me as without very much force or character. He stood before the coffin that day and his speech was interpreted to me.

The old man pushed back his hair and said: "My sister" (pointing to the corpse), "you have gone before; you have passed over the mountain. On its peak I am standing. I can look over into the world to which you have gone. I can look back into the world from which you have gone. I hear around you the voices of your children. You have gone before us. I hear the voices of your mother's children as they wept when she passed over the mountain. I hear the voices of your mother's mother's children as they wept. And such is the course of man. You have gone before. You were taken when the flowers were blooming in your life. I am left here when the leaves have fallen off their branches. We don't know why you were taken; we can only say that the One above knows why I was left standing here with the leaves falling upon my branches."

While this interpretation is quite accurate, it has lost all its beauty in translation. It is the crudest kind of an interpretation, but is as near as I can give it.

Indian life is full of that kind of beauty, with that kind of expressions, the nicest kind, the most direct.

About two years ago I was in court when a lawyer in cross-examining an Indian witness queried: "Now, considering your relations with the plaintiff, and the various transactions between you, what was your opinion as to the relative state of facts at the time those relations were

had?"—or something to that effect. The Indian looked at the lawyer a while and then said, "I think so". I am telling this to illustrate how often we approach these people with just such complicated ideas in our heads, which, often, we don't understand ourselves but expect them to understand.

Another story illustrates the point directly. Some years ago a special agent came from Washington with a message to a certain western tribe. He attempted to impress upon the Indians a conception of the rich blessing they were enjoying through American citizenship; but of course they did not comprehend it. He assured them that the great father in Washington had given them all these blessings and the protection of the country backed by a great army and a great navy. "We have heard in Washington", he said, "that some of you are living with two wives. We are pained to know that this is true". The Indians made little response until a man of middle age arose and said:

"We are sorry to know that the great father feels this so deeply. It is true that some of us live with two women. It is true, but we keep those two women in the same tent, the same house. I find that some white men live with a woman as his wife in one house but has another wife sometimes in another house, but does not say anything about it. Our fault must be because we have them both together in the same house and tell about it."

Last Friday a young man and a young woman came to me, not together, separately as a friend. The young man was quite well educated. The young woman said she expected to be married. She did not tell the prospective husband's name but said only, "He will come". In an hour or so the young man came and said: "We are going to be married". He did not say to whom—only that she had been here. They asked me to go to Sioux City with them and help them to get a license. I replied, jokingly,



"I will go with you but there is one thing that I always do in such circumstances, or if I have anything to do with the ceremony, I always kiss the bride." He did not know whether I was joking or not. He hesitated a long time before replying: "Well, we will see. I guess we have to have you go along and I guess, sir, that will be all right this time."

I think one of the most amusing stories of Indian life that I have heard was told to me about two years ago, about an old man, a fine old character and philosopher, who had discovered the right way of living and who was bubbling over with good nature all the time, telling about some jokes that passed among them in early days. A young man called *MAËSHTIËGA* (meaning a rabbit) had been married a few years and his wife was one of the substantial kind with some very decided ideas. There was a little trouble council in which a man, after talking for some time with much agitation, said: "My friends, there is something I want to tell you all. My wife loves another man"—speaking his name. This seemed to have a depressing effect upon those present. Finally the speaker picked up his wife's blankets and laid them down at the feet of the other man, saying: "I have no ill will toward you or against either of you".

In Indian life that was the bravest thing a man could do. It was one of the greatest acts of personal sacrifice that a man could make. It was very uncommon also; but, believing that his wife loved another man more than she loved him, he gave her to him. Among those present there was a flutter of excitement, showing sympathy and admiration for the husband for his bravery. Rabbit was looking on and listening. He realized what this man had done, the bravest thing that a man could do. Rabbit was a brave man himself, though he was so good-natured about it that the people did not take him seriously. But he got

up, thinking he was going to make a name for himself, and, pointing to a certain man among them, said: "It is a great sacrifice that I am making but I give my wife to that man". There was no occasion for it. The old lady wrapped the blankets about her and said, "No you don't, I shall go to my father's tent". And she took her blankets and few belongings and went to her father's tent. Rabbit's bravery had been turned into ridicule; and the story goes that that night Rabbit was heard approaching the tent of his wife's father singing and calling her to come back. So the Omaha made up a little song about it of which I wish I could give you the translation. It was a very clever take-off on the old man's bravery.

On the Omaha reservation we had another character; I am sure she was something like Mrs. Partington. She spoke English. I have never met another person who could twist great big words around as she could. My wife and I once called on the old lady and she gave me a present. Then she went over to my wife and said: "Now, Mrs. Keefe, you must not be jocose (meaning jealous) about this man." She was telling a short time before about her father, who was a fine old man. She said he told her that the people were not eating the right things, but were eating a lot of things out of tin cans, and that was not the right way. When he was young he did not eat meat, but he ate turnips and herbs and such things, and those old people who ate those things never died but these other people died, because they ate things out of stores and out of tin cans. Then she said to her father, "Those old people never die?" He said, "No; when I was a young man they never died." She replied, "My father, where are those old people that never died, where are they now?" And added: "Then father he can't talk any more."

It is true that those people in the early days lived on what nature furnished. In fact, we hear people say after

they come from the reservation, "How are these people going to support themselves, or is the government supporting them? Where are they finding sustenance and how?" They supported themselves a long time before the white people came and very few of them ever perished from want.

DISCUSSION BY MELVIN R. GILMORE

*Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:*

We have a duty to perform in relation to the Indians who inhabited this country and these plains before the white man extended his powers thus far west. We should preserve a true portrayal of the Indian life. It is our duty to preserve for their descendants representations of what their ancestors were. How fascinating it would be if we could know what our ancestors were at a very early stage when they were in Europe living a wild life. How interesting it would be if we knew the manner of life of our ancestors who lived on the plains and in the forests of Germany and northwestern Europe. If the Romans who conquered us had only thought it worth while to preserve our songs, dances and stories, and the means of subsistence which we had, you can imagine readily the interest it would be to us. We owe it to the descendants of the aborigines of this country, that we have overturned and made into another country, to get a picture of their old life. We are fond of calling certain characteristics American in contradistinction to others of Europe. We speak of the American's love of personal independence. That is one of the personal characteristics of the Indians before they were made dependents. I suppose there were no more self-reliant people in the world than the Indians were before we came and changed them to what they are now, forcing them into a new mold. I think it is a wonderful thing that these people could be made over in one generation and are here at this time,



taking their place as citizens under our form of government and working under our industrial system.

I knew an old man who was of mature age when the tribe went upon the reservation. He lived the old life and was known as a good member of the tribe in the old way of life. When, in 1855, they were put upon the reservation, he, along with all the others, had to make his life all over again; and he succeeded to such an extent that he was as good a farmer as there was in the county. He could not read the *Twentieth Century Farmer* and got no help from farmers' institutes. He had to work out his own salvation. When he died he had a good farm and cultivated all the grains grown in our climate. He raised cattle, hogs and poultry. The care of poultry is the last thing an Indian will undertake, because to do so he must stay at home to watch the young chicks, and he does not like to be so bound down, but this man had all these things.

There is no primitive people that has so strong a hold on our imagination as the American Indians. How large a place they occupy in the history of this country! I regret that there is so much fanciful writing concerning them. The truth would be more interesting and better reading than the wild fancies of writers who wish to produce what they suppose readers require. There is so much quackery practiced by white people in their writing about the Indians. There are many people who go to the reservation, look at them, go away and write volumes when they do not know what they are writing about. The Indian had started in the way of agriculture. The greatest cereal in our country was developed from the wild state by Indian planters, laboriously working with rude tools. Think of the long generations and succession of ages required to develop maize—Indian corn. All evidences of botany, philosophy, ethnology, folklore, and every avenue of approach to the question leads to the conclusion that the native place of

the wild plant that was developed into corn was in the southern part of Mexico, among the Maya, a nation which had acquired a considerable degree of civilization. There are other plants that we have received from them. The bean—except the white navy bean, the soy bean, and perhaps one or two others from Asia; the potato from South America; the squash, red peppers, tomatoes, tobacco (though that is a gift of doubtful value) have come to us from the Indians.

Of corn the Pawnee, Omaha, Ponka, and the Oto raised a number of varieties of all the different types that we have now. They cultivated fifteen kinds of beans, eight kinds of squash and one of melon. We have many medicines that we learned of from the Indians. A native Nebraska plant has become one of our best medicines. The old name was *Echinacea angustifolia*, but in the revised botanical nomenclature it is now called *Brauneria pallida*. It was known to the Indians many years ago, and Dr. Meyer, of Pawnee City, Nebraska, introduced it into our materia medica some years ago. The art of making sugar from trees (maple sugar) is of American Indian origin. The eastern tribes make it from the hard maple trees, but the tribes out here in Nebraska made sugar from the sap of the soft maple. The Omaha word for sugar is *ZHAN<sup>N</sup>NI*, *ZHAN<sup>N</sup>* means wood, and *NI* means water. The very word shows that they had the article before they ever saw a white man. In the Dakota language the word for sugar is *CHAN<sup>N</sup>PI*, wood juice, or tree juice, *CHAN<sup>N</sup>* meaning wood, and *PI* meaning juice. They would not have so called it if they had first seen it as the white man's manufactured product.

Mr. Keefe said something about taking possession of this country from American Indians. It is common to speak of the Indians as dirty, lazy beings, hanging around white settlements begging. I would ask you who the beggars were a hundred years ago? In Nebraska the

Indians were the independent people then. They knew how to live under conditions prevalent at that time. We did not. We had to beg from them shelter, food and clothing. Our trappers and explorers could not have lived without the aid of the Indians. They were dependent upon them. We were the beggars then. We have destroyed the means of support they had. This is not the country now that it was to them at that time. It is wonderful that in one generation they could learn how to adapt themselves to these new conditions. They can not live now in the old way, because we have destroyed the resources they had. They have only just begun to adapt themselves to this new environment and to support themselves under these conditions. The woman's work then, as now, was much the same. Her job has not been changed. She was always, then and now, the home maker, but the man has been thrown out of a job because we have changed the conditions of life for him. He was a provider and defender under old conditions, as a hunter; but now he cannot provide because he does not know how under changed conditions. So it came to be said that the Indian "let the women do the work." The man's work is changed, so he must learn a new job. Imagine China coming over to America and overwhelming us and putting us on reservations and putting agents over us to mold us into the Chinese form of civilization. Imagine how reluctant we should be to take on that form of government and be molded that way, to wear our hair in a queue, to eat Chinese food, and wear Chinese clothes. How quickly we would go back to our old ways instead of the way the Chinese would want us to do. We would go back to our own way because it would be easier for us to act in our own way. I would not want to be made into a poor imitation of a Chinese; no more does the American Indian want to be made into a poor imitation of a



European. By that illustration you can see how hard it has been for them to learn a new job.

Mr. Keefe said that the American Indian is entitled to have preserved his true place in history. The Indians have affection for their home land. They revere the graves of their ancestors. They commemorate localities indented with incidents of their tribal history. We are strangers in this land; we have not been here so very long. We are not attached to it by a long line of ancestry as they are. The Pawnee were a Nebraska people. Their country was all the middle part of Nebraska. They love it as their fatherland. Even the children born since they left Nebraska have heard so much about the old home land that they think of it with affection and are always glad to talk about it with any one from Nebraska. Now they are carried away into another land where climate and water and conditions of life are different; and as it was not their own choice, they went away in 1875 about 2,200 strong; they are less than seven hundred now. Weakened by the change in climate, by being pressed into the arbitrary mold of our manner of life, and by homesickness for the fatherland, they have dwindled down to a small number. The Omaha are about as numerous as they ever were. They are still in their fatherland. The Pawnee are not so fortunate. Indians of many tribes have been taken from every part of the country—from timbered lands, prairie lands and the mountains—and dumped into Oklahoma. We do not know the human interest that attaches to their former occupation and their early life in this land. We do not know how they lived. We do not know the songs they sang or the shrines they had. We do not know the holy places and the places of their graves. These would have been of great interest to us. I know it certainly would have been so to me.

A student of the university came in and asked some questions concerning Indian geography and botany of

Nebraska, and when I answered her questions and extended remarks on the aboriginal geography and botany and showed their correlations with the Indian life of the state, she said: "Nebraska now means more to me and is dearer than ever before." So when all our people know there is something of human interest that attaches to Nebraska it will be dearer to us although it was not our ancestors' home.

As to the difference between Indians and white people, it has been said, "The Indian is just humanity bound in red." There is another saying which might apply here: "The colonel's lady and Julia O'Grady are sisters under the skin." Indians are different from us only superficially. We are brothers under the skin.

I remember what an educated Omaha Indian woman said to me in speaking of the difficulty of being built over into a new form of life: "The Omaha have not had time to rightly learn the white man's civilization, because it has taken all their time and attention to keep from being cheated out of everything they have." Although her husband is a white man, and she was speaking to me, another white man, she said: "Sometimes I wish I might never see a white face again." She was not thinking of her husband, nor of me as a white man. She thought of her husband as a husband and not as a white man, just as she thought of me as a friend, not as a white man. She was thinking of white men in the mass. If you lived on the reservation, as Mr. Keefe does, you would know how true that is.

I wonder whether Mr. Keefe had the story of *MAN-SHTINGA* correct or not. I heard it a little differently from his rendering. This is the story of the origin of a society in the Mandan tribe. A party were out scouting for the enemy, being in the enemy's country. One evening, at just about the beginning of the evening meal, as they

were sitting around the fire, all at once they heard a voice singing a song of defiance. The leader put ashes over the fire to extinguish the light. Then they deployed around a wide circle and when they came together they were around a tree which showed marks of a fire on its bark about five feet high. At the foot of the tree there were ashes and burnt human bones. The leader said: "Here died a man"; and out of this incident there sprung a society which I think is something like the society of the Knights of Pythias. It was founded on the sentiments of loyalty and devotion to duty and to each other. The society increased in numbers and spread to other tribes. A member of the society had the misfortune of which Mr. Keefe spoke. He made a feast to his companions in the society. He said to his wife, "Boil meat." That meant to make a feast for his companions. He invited them in. The woman went to the spring for water. One of his companions slipped away from the tent and, out of her sight, saw her talking with another man, her lover, by the spring. Afterwards she came back with the water. Her husband knew that he could not hold his wife's affections. The companion came back and told what he had seen, that she had been talking with this other man, her lover. The feast went on, and they were all seated about. The husband arose at the feast—he had sent some of his companions out to get and bring in this other man that had been talking to his wife and he had come in. The husband then arose and sang this song: "I spoke to the woman but she would not hear, so I give her to you." These words are all there is to the song and it is still sung among the Omaha today. Then he took her blankets over and laid them at the feet of the other man, his wife's lover, as Mr. Keefe narrated to you. It was considered as a great deed of resignation and an act of bravery. It was several generations ago that this original incident occurred. So *MA<sup>N</sup>SHTI<sup>N</sup>GA*, who was a member



of the Mandan society in the Omaha tribe, thought it would be a brave act to do the same thing, and at a feast which he made to his companions of the Mandan society he got up and sang this song. There was no cause for it, so she went to her father's lodge, and he had a much harder time wooing her back than he had to win her at first.

We have cut the Indians off from the development of a civilization of their own in the beginning of their progress. If they had not been disturbed they would, of course—as we did, as the Chinese did, and as every other nation has done—have developed a civilization of their own along the line of resources and conditions of the country. We have developed our civilization under European conditions. We never can know what their civilization would have been. We do not know what shape it would have taken. They would have progressed; they were on the way. We are on the way, only a little farther along. They would have progressed to some form of civilization suited to their condition here. Of course, in time, there will be only one civilization over the whole world.

# IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY OF LOCAL HISTORY

BY JAMES E. LE ROSSIGNOL

[Paper read at the annual meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society, January 13, 1913.]

*Mr. Chairman, and Ladies and Gentlemen:*

Mr. Paine, your secretary, tells me that he would like to have an expression from an outsider on the subject of local history. I know little of history in general and less of local history and therefore think myself well qualified to speak as an outsider. True, I have read a great deal of the sort of history that was written thirty or forty years ago, before modern methods of investigation were well established, but now I know that most of the information thus obtained was quite unreliable, and I have not been able to improve my knowledge, or ignorance, in recent years. But I have, as you see, a proper spirit of humility, which should lead me in the right way, though it may not lead me far. Also I have much sympathy with historians, knowing the difficulty of their work of investigation and the still greater difficulty of arousing the public to a due appreciation of this great and important work.

It was courageous in Mr. Paine to let an outsider like myself speak on this platform because he did not know what I might say. I might say something that I ought not to say. For example, I might say that history is no more important than political economy, but it would be an impertinence to make such a statement on this occasion, so I will not say it. I might say that all historians are liars, but I will not say that, either, for it is not true. To be

sure, some historians of the past, particularly biographers and genealogists, have told a good many lies, but they are all dead now, and we hope that they have long since expiated their faults and have been admitted to the historian's paradise.

As to historians of the present day, they have only one virtue, the worship of truth, and no redeeming vices at all. They will tell the truth and shame the devil, and all their best friends as well. Nothing escapes the historian's searchlight, and, like the recording angel, he sets down everything—good, bad, and indifferent—in his book. I have a wholesome fear of the historian, for I realize that at this very moment he may be taking down all that I am saying and that at some future time, in this world or the next, my words may rise up in judgment against me. So I try to be careful as to what I say before an audience like this and am tempted to use words not to express thought but to conceal it.

There is a good story about an Assyrian historian who used to write upon tables of clay, which were then dried or burned and piled away in the library. This Assyrian had a mortal enemy and spent many days thinking of the most cruel and unusual punishment that he could inflict upon him. Finally a brilliant thought came to him, and before the inspiration cooled he ran to his enemy with a brick and said: "Sir, you are the meanest man I know. I might curse your ancestors, but I will not. I might curse yourself and all your posterity, but I will do worse than that. Listen! tremble! I will write your evil deeds upon this brick, have it packed away in the royal archives, and when, five thousand years hence, men dig up the ruins of our city, they will read about your crimes and you shall be infamous forever."

There is a moral in this story, for it shows very well the ethical value of history. The historian is the man with



the searchlight who peers into everything and tells everything that he sees. Like the law, he is a terror to evil doers and a praise to them that do well, because he tells the truth. Publicity kills many social evils as sunlight kills the germs of many diseases, while it encourages good deeds as the sunlight gives life to grass and flowers. Common gossip contributes to this end. The press does much to make people respectable; and history, by keeping a record of the words and deeds of men, helps them to realize the importance of life and the value of a good name. We live not only in the eyes of our friends and neighbors but in the sight of a larger world and in the view of future generations, and the thought of many eyes looking upon us and many minds pronouncing judgment upon us cannot but make us careful about what we say and do.

In former times historians used to color and distort facts for the glorification of their friends and patrons; more recently they would pervert the truth for the edification of children and the development of patriotism; but now, in this age of science, the historian follows truth alone and worships the God of Things as they are, believing that honest character and worthy patriotism can never be built upon a foundation of lies. So the historian describes the Pilgrim Fathers as they were, gives a true picture of colonial life with light and shade, explains the right and wrong of the revolutionary war, the war of 1812, the civil war, doing justice to both sides and favoring none. He tells of the greatness and littleness of our heroes, shows the successes and failures of the past, and traces the path of progress as well as he can for example, warning and guidance to future generations.

It used to be the custom to glorify the pioneer, to make of him a sort of saint or missionary who came to the western plains for the glory of God and the salvation of the Indian. There were saints and missionaries in those days,

as now, but the typical pioneer was nothing of the sort; and to paint him with a halo about his head is to do him an injustice and make him ridiculous. The surviving pioneers do not desire such a picture and those who have passed into the eternal world do not need it.

For all that, it is well to honor the pioneers, to treasure their memory, to be grateful to them for what they have done in making it possible for us to live in peace and comfort in this good land. The worship of ancestors is not altogether without a rational basis. If we honor our ancestors, our children will honor us, and there is something beautiful and inspiring in the thought of successive generations looking backward in appreciation of all that was good in their fathers and mothers, and looking forward in hope that their children and children's children will be still nobler and better than they. Family pride that is based upon honor and virtue is a good thing, and the just pride of a people in the character and achievements of their ancestors is a power that makes for good in the education of the rising generation.

The people of the Old World understand the importance of this more than we do, and we must not be ashamed to imitate them. It is a fine thing to see, in cities like Edinburgh, Munich, and Geneva, how they remember their great men by monuments, statues, tablets, memorial windows, and records of every kind, in streets, churches, colleges, museums, libraries and many other places. As one walks along Princess street in Edinburgh, for example, and sees the noble monuments to Walter Scott, Robert Burns, Allan Ramsay, James Hogg and many more of the worthies of Scotland, one cannot but think how inspiring it must be to live in a place where the past is remembered and where citizens who serve their country well may hope to live in the thoughts of future generations.

In this respect local history may be of greater ethical

value than national or world history, for by it the work of obscure men and women of whom the world at large can never hear, may be noticed and remembered. To this end we need not only the history of the country as a whole, but the history of every state, city, town, county, church, society, and family; and it should be the ambition of every man, woman and child to have a good name and an honorable place in the little circle to which he belongs.

If it is true that the study of local history can and will improve the character of individuals, it follows that it will also improve the government, which is in a large measure a reflection of the character of the people. It will develop local patriotism and a civic consciousness, without which, in a democratic country, good government is impossible. We of the West cannot deny that we are somewhat lacking in local pride. We are always talking of the places where we were born—of Chicago, New York, Philadelphia or Boston, instead of Omaha, Lincoln, Hastings or Beatrice. Our heart is in the place where we were born and brought up and not in the place where we live. We are pilgrims and strangers here. Lincoln is our dwelling place, but Boston is our home. This is not right. We need not forget our old home, indeed we cannot, but we must be loyal to the place where we live and work. Here is our home; here are our friends; here is our opportunity; our duty is here, and here we shall find our reward—the satisfaction that comes from honest effort, from the approval of our neighbors and the hope that the work of our hands will be established for good.

We are not altogether responsible for our lack of local patriotism, which is largely the result of the unsettled condition of a new country; but we are responsible, in so far as that lack is due to our own selfish indifference and neglect. Time will work great change in this regard. Conditions will become more stable; migration will be relatively



less; the proportion of native born to the total population will increase; the people will have a stronger attachment to their native state; they will be less tolerant of bad government and more eager to make improvements of every kind, that the state may be a good place in which to live. All these things will come about in the course of time; but they will come much sooner if people are conscious of their need and willing to take measures for bringing about the results which they desire. Among these measures, I take it, none is more important than the works of an Historical Society, such as this.

If the Nebraska State Historical Society did nothing more than make the state interesting to the people who live in it, it would be doing a work the value of which would far outweigh the cost. The West is a wonderful country, well named the Golden West. It has good soil, a fine climate, great fields of corn, cattle upon a thousand hills, splendid resources and prospects of every kind. In so far as material things are concerned the people of the West have everything that they need: food, shelter, clothing—all the necessities and luxuries of life, not to mention automobiles, which some would place among the best things that the world can give. But it must be admitted that something is lacking; it is hard to say what. Man cannot live by bread alone, nor even by automobiles. There are some higher values without which the lives of the richest must be bare and empty.

The people of Europe may be poor in material wealth, but in their places of historical interest with all the sentiments that attach to them they have treasures that money cannot buy. The Germans have the Rhine which, from Schaffhausen to Aachen, is an epitome of their history for two thousand years. The English have Cromlechs, Norman castles, Gothic cathedrals and historic remains of every kind, calling up memories of a great and glorious past.

The Scots never cease to boast of their little hills and vales, their insignificant streams and barren moors, because they are full of memories of Bruce and Wallace, of Robert Burns and Walter Scott. The Irish may be exiled from their native land, but ever look back with pride and affection to the land of the shamrock, the hill of Tara, the lakes of Killarney. Memories such as these may not satisfy bodily hunger or thirst or protect against the winter's cold, but when people are fed and clothed and sheltered they feel the need of something that shall beautify and glorify life, make them proud of their fellow countrymen and willing to live and die for their native land.

Nebraska is by no means without a history, as the members of this society well know; and it is the purpose of the society to collect and preserve the records of the past, so that the people at large may know that they are living on historic ground, may take a greater pride in the state and be willing to make greater sacrifices for the general good. Material prosperity is desirable, for it is the basis and foundation of higher things; but very many of our fellow citizens have all the material wealth that they need, all the lands, houses and automobiles that they can use, and it is high time that they should take a greater interest in the cultural side of life, in science, art, literature, and history, without which a truly great civilization is impossible.

Some frugal soul—a taxpayer, probably—may ask the very pertinent question, “Will it pay?” In answer to this question it would not be hard to show that all the money spent on the study of local history, like bread cast upon the waters, is likely to be returned many fold. Consider the value of real estate alone, a value that cannot exist unless people stay in the state, where they will not stay unless they find life worth living there. All the things that tend to make life interesting, to glorify and beautify life, such as parks and play grounds, beautiful streets and public

buildings, churches, schools, colleges and universities, art, music, history, science, philosophy, religion, and a spirit of patriotism and good fellowship among the people; all of these things tend to keep the people of Nebraska at home and to increase the value of real estate. On the contrary, the lack of these things tends to drive people away to Colorado, California, or elsewhere, and to cause the value of real estate to come down.

Again, it may be that through the works of the Historical Society other important contributions will be made to the material wealth of the state and this in an unexpected direction. The researches of Mr. Gilmore, for example, show that most valuable results might follow from investigations carried on in a purely scientific spirit. Mr. Gilmore has made a study of certain food plants used by the Indians long before the arrival of the whites, and it may be that some of these plants will prove to be of great economic value and do much to solve the problem of the arid West. If so, the money spent on the Nebraska Historical Society will be returned a thousand fold.

But even if this work should not pay in dollars and cents, if there should be no increase in the value of lands, or houses, or cattle, but only an improvement in the character of the people, an addition to the beauty and dignity of life, a contribution to those spiritual values which make life worth living; even if nothing more than that should come of the study of local history, I am sure that the best citizens of Nebraska would agree with the members of the Historical Society in thinking that all the effort and sacrifice that had been made was well worth while.



## HISTORY

BY RIGHT REVEREND J. HENRY TIHEN, Bishop of Lincoln

[Paper read at the annual meeting of the Nebraska State Historical Society, January 13, 1913.]

One God, one human race, one scene of human activity—the world in which we live—one story of it all, that is history. One brotherhood that had its inception in the aeons of the past from the Fathers' creative hand, that has ramified and extended itself through the centuries to the present, maintaining its unity in its universality. The great family is still intact, the blood relationship of a common origin still exists, and man may not ignore this relationship nor attempt to rupture it, or, like the prodigal son, to set himself outside the fellowship of brother and the protecting love of Father. Distances of time and space are accidentals that may modify the manifestations of this relationship, but do not change its nature. The fur clad Laplander in his frozen house of the North and the naked negro in the jungles of Africa are bound together by this common tie. Nor does time essentially influence this relationship. What matter though a thousand years separate me from my brother man? He is still my brother because of the common Father to whom "a thousand years are as one day". From Adam the first as he walked forth from the creative hand of his God, through the ages of the past, the present and the future to last of mortals in his dying hour, when the world shall sink back into its original chaos, there runs this golden chain of humanity, each individual human being a link in this chain. No man may with impunity attempt to destroy this solidarity, this

eternal homogeneity of the race. No man can place himself above it, no man may seek to place himself beneath it.

From these general fundamental principles of the solidarity of the human race, no matter where or when dispersed, there flows naturally, logically and rationally the interest that men take or ought to take in the doings of the race in its life story. That is history. A man in action is biographical history, a community in action is local history, a nation in action is a nation's history, and the world in action is universal history. The energies and the activities of the vast army of men and women of the past have woven the fabric of the world's story. It is all one. The men and women of to-day weave into that continuous fabric their hopes and anxieties, struggles and victories of love and hate, of achievement and failure, and then retire from the scene of action, "to sleep with their fathers", and another generation takes their place, to work into the same fabric the story of the new achievements which the future bears in her womb, but hidden from the eyes of the present. And so on until the end of time, when the last page of the world's history shall have been written, the last thread of human activity woven into the great fabric of the world's life story, and a supreme judge shall pass on its merits. And who does not even now discern in this great fabric made by the men and women of all days in all the world, running through it all, clearly perceptible to the eye that is willing to see, the golden thread of an energy and activity that comes not from men, not even from the greatest of them, the golden thread of a Providence that "ordereth all things wisely and disposeth them sweetly", the superior power that is omnipotence, the intelligence of which it can truly be said that the "wisdom of men is only its folly".

Here then the reason for history. Here its value. Here its commendation. Here the cause why the deeds of

men in any generation or place be not permitted to disappear, but be incorporated into the great acts of humanity.

Naturally this general relationship of all men is subject to intensification by circumstances and conditions of time and place. Family and community and nation are ties that bind closer and increase the interests men have in each other. So does time. Men are more interested in the affairs of to-day than of yesterday, more in those of this year and century than in those of last. Perhaps it is due to our innate weakness or selfishness that we truly care so little for anybody or anything except what is close to us in time and place. Some one has well said that no man can truthfully say that he is deeply concerned about the future of his great-grandchildren. This trait of human nature probably accounts for the fact that local and contemporary history has more attraction for the average man than general and ancient.

Yet we must in theory at least—even though we be not strong enough to “suit the action to the word”—hold to the solidarity of the great human family. It was a God who solicitously inquired, “Where is thy brother?” It was a murderer who answered, “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

It is to the credit of our day in the world’s history that men realize more than ever this relationship and solidarity of the great human family. Fast trains and fast boats have virtually annihilated distance. Because of these the world is close to-day, geographically speaking. Telegraph and telephone and a perfect mail service have brought it close together, intellectually and socially. Over the sentient wire, in cable and on pole, comes the story of the heartbeat and the mind flashes of my brother in every part of the world. And back to him travels the news of myself. World-wide movements for world-wide betterments are probably only one of the natural and logical results of this nearness of mankind to itself. Peace movements and a general



interest in the welfare of the masses rather than of the classes, sociological activity in general, the care of children, the housing of men and women, the banishment of factors that tend to shorten or destroy their lives are so many evidences of the quickened consciousness in our generation of the solidarity of our race. And we go beyond our age of the present we know into the past of which we know only a little. We have gone to the fountainheads for information. We want to know something of the men and women of the past. We have ransacked the libraries, have noted the story of the printed page, of the musty manuscript, have looked everywhere on the surface of the earth for the signposts that would point the hand for us to the way in which our forefathers walked. Into the bowels of the earth have we gone for further information. We got from the excavated ruins of the past the textbooks of another school, the story of another civilization. It is unfair to past generations to say that they were indifferent in these matters. There always was among men a certain regard and even veneration for the past; but the spirit of homogeneity was never so pronounced as it is to-day. "Our great highways of commerce and civilization to-day are no longer, it has been well said, than those 'threads of soil', the Indian trails; but they are much wider, much smoother, far more serviceable and do more for us to-day, than did the beginning in trail-making for the men and women of that day. Braddock's road through the wilderness reached no farther than the trail he followed. The Cumberland Road was paralleled its entire distance by an Indian path which in turn was preceded by the track of the buffaloes to their salt-licks. Yet both were wide roads infinitely more useful and serviceable than their forerunners. Note the double track of one of our great railways, following the exact line of buffalo trails and Indian paths, to figure the difference in service to man." Through expansion of our

views with regard to our fellow men of the present and the past we should improve in service and use to them.

I realize that, practical and utilitarian in view as Americans generally are, some in the audience are perhaps inclined to say to me: "These things about the past and the reason for the knowledge of general history are all very good in their way; but of what practical benefit are they?" In reply, permit me to cite a few authorities. Jowett tells us that:

"The greatest changes of which we have had experience as yet are due to our increasing knowledge of history and of nature. They have been produced by few minds appearing in three or four favored nations in comparatively a short period of time. May we be allowed to imagine the minds of men everywhere working together during many ages for the completion of our knowledge? May not the increase of knowledge transfigure the world?"

Another tells us: "Nothing is so likely to beget in us a spirit of enlightened liberality, of Christian forbearance, as a careful study of the history of doctrine". Another says: "A man who does not know what has been thought by those who have gone before him is sure to set an undue value upon his own ideas. All our hopes of the future depend upon a sound understanding of the past". "The thoughts that were developed in the past are of infinite consequence". "He who has learned to understand the true character and tendency of many succeeding ages is not likely to go very far wrong in estimating his own". Even poets are urged to study history as Wordsworth declares: "I hold that the degree in which poets dwell in sympathy with the past marks exactly the degree of their poetical faculty". "There are no truths which more readily gain the assent of mankind or are more firmly retained by them than those of an historical nature". Goethe declared that he who cannot give to himself a satisfactory account of at least 3,000 years of the world's history merely exists in

darkness, cannot emerge into the full sunlight of human life. History broadens the mind, enlarges the viewpoint. A narrow, prejudiced mind cannot study history. The one or the other will be dropped”.

I will not tire you by further citations or arguments. Your very presence here under the auspices of a society that has for one of its objects the fostering of historical study and the membership of many of you in that organization is conclusive evidence of your views upon the subject. I do wish, however, in closing, to call attention to history's claim and service on the patriotic heart. As a nation making force, history stands out preëminent. The main influences working in the making of a nation may be said to be, “(1st) physical environment; (2d) race; (3d) language; (4th) custom; (5th) religion; (6th) common interests; (7th) history, or the men who made it; (8th) the government”. The history of the nations past and of the worlds past is its lesson for the present. “This solidarity in time, as it has been called, is no mere sentiment; or, if a sentiment, it is one that is strong enough to hold together in unity of nationhood men who have little else in common. Thus the Swiss have no unity of language, or of race, or of religion; their government is most decentralized; their country is divided into well marked regions that differ in almost every respect and are well-nigh cut off from mutual intercourse. But the nation has common memories. It has not forgotten Morgarten and Sempach, where it overthrew the Austrians, nor Grandson and Morat where it ruined Charles the Bold. Nor must it forget the still more crucial struggles in which it weathered the nineteenth century. So too the three imperial eagles that divided the fallen Polish state could neither destroy the people nor tear up the pages of her history. They cannot debar her during the long night of her captivity from dreaming of the days when she vindicated her right to live against Russian



and German and Swede and became the bulwark of Christendom against the Turk." Brunetière sums up the importance of history to a nation in the one sentence: "There is no fatherland without a long history, which is at one and the same time its stay, its justification, the source of its life and of its perpetual rejuvenation". Here then is the additional fact that history in its making and in its study is the duty of the citizen as well as the privilege of the student.

If there has been rhyme or reason, argument or sentiment in aught I have said to you, then have I spoken a word in favor of the work in which the officers and members of the Nebraska State Historical Society have applied themselves so diligently in the past, a work of which every student and patriot will spontaneously say, "God speed it".

## THE PATHFINDERS, THE HISTORIC BACKGROUND OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

BY HEMAN C. SMITH

[Read at the annual meeting of the State Historical Society of Nebraska, January 16, 1913.]

Mark Twain is reported to have said, "Anybody can write a book, but to write a preface—ah, there's the rub". I strongly sympathize with this sentiment when asked to write a thirty minute paper on a subject which requires volumes to treat intelligently. Of course I can only present an introduction to this exhaustless subject.

The children of modern Egypt, India, Persia, Palestine and other oriental countries, when studying the history of their several countries find a rich historic background which dates backward many centuries and furnishes inspiration for delightful research. The children of modern Europe have also a valuable heritage in their historic relation to classic Greece and Rome, and even our eastern states have the history of the colonial period of which we of the West can make no boast. True our western valleys are dotted with mounds, indicating a prehistoric civilization, and our western mountains reveal the strongholds of the Cliff Dwellers. Hence the study of occidental archaeology is of entrancing interest, rivaling the study of the same subject in the orient; yet our deductions therefrom are largely conjecture, and the historic value of these relics of antiquity is misty and uncertain as no generally accepted history of former ages has been transferred to this generation.

We dream of the manners and customs of the people of antiquity who once inhabited our fertile valleys and

chiseled their habitation in the rocky ribs of our towering mountains. We ask, "Who were they? Whither have they gone? Were they civilized or barbarian? Were they Christian or heathen? What was the extent of their enlightenment in arts and sciences?" We turn inquiringly to the contents of our large and accumulating libraries but find no answer. We speculate and conjecture, but our conjectures and deductions lack historic confirmation.

Fortunately the early pioneers of western civilization, the pathfinders, who traversed our fertile plains and scaled our romantic mountains were dreamers. They dreamed of an Eldorado with mountains of gold and perpetual springs, whose crystal waters were a fountain of youth. Those dreams and the hope of their realization moved them to heroic efforts, nor did they falter when in the quest of the fondly cherished goal; they met suffering and sacrifices even to the facing of death itself. The love of gold is authentically declared to be the root of all evil, and yet, incidentally, good often springs from its quest—not always to those who make the sacrifice or bear the suffering, but frequently as a legacy to those who come after.

To our immediate ancestors who were the first permanent settlers of the west, great credit is due; for without their great practical accomplishments, through sacrifice and suffering, their dreams would be like the baseless fabric of a night dream, "as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty; or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite." . . .

As the streams that drain North America have a general trend toward the south, one would naturally suppose the course of migration would be either southward or northward; but some power not easy to explain had a stronger influence than the natural contour of the country, and the



trend of migration was toward the west or northwest. This, however, has not been peculiar to our western civilization, as the trend of civilization since history began has been westward. From its oriental cradle civilization has ever turned its face westward. There have, however, been a few exceptions to this general rule, as in the instance of Vasquez de Coronado, the earliest pathfinder among civilized men who traversed these western plains. Allured by the reports of vast wealth brought by Friar Marcos of Nice, he fitted out an expedition in a province of Western Mexico, and started February 23, 1540, through a trackless desert to the north and northeast. The reports of riches still spurred him on though often disappointed by finding abject poverty.

The exact localities visited by Coronado are difficult to determine, but all students are agreed that he was in the territory embraced in modern Kansas. Whether he ever entered the territory embraced in Nebraska is doubted, though presented as probable by some writers. Authors differ widely, and the destination of Coronado is located from Genoa, Nebraska, to Junction City, Kansas. On a map showing routes of all the principal explorers and early roads and highways, from data prepared by Frank Bond, chief clerk, issued in 1908 by the department of the interior, Richard Ballinger secretary, the route of Coronado crosses the line of Kansas and Nebraska and thence northeast to a point in Clay county, Nebraska, near the present location of Clay Center. According to the map his route crossed the south line of the state of Nebraska and the Republican river near the southeast corner of Harlan county.

Some color to the approximate correctness of this theory is afforded by the finding of the old sword on the Republican river some years ago. The theory is rendered even more plausible from an account published in the fourteenth annual report of the Bureau of Ethnology which

claims to give distances, times and direction collated from all the accounts. Herrera, who accompanied the expedition, speaks of finding a river of more water and more population than others before passed, and Coronado, in a letter to the king, said that after a journey of seventy-seven days, in which he traveled nine hundred and fifty leagues from Mexico, he came to the province called Quivira. "Where I reached it, it is in the fortieth degree."<sup>1</sup> (Page 582.) "After nine days march I reached some plains, so vast that I did not find their limit anywhere that I went, although I traveled over them for more than three hundred leagues". (Page 580.)

Law's map of 1721 indicates that the French had then explored the Missouri river as far north as Pierre, South Dakota; but the records of their explorations are very meager and indefinite. It is well known that the elder Verendrye reached the Missouri river as early as 1738. The map issued by the department of the interior indicates that the Verendrye brothers, sons of the above, crossed the Canada line in 1743, in an effort to find the western ocean, and pursued a westerly course to a point near the later site of Fort Benton, Montana, and then turned south and east to the region of the Bad Lands, now in Wyoming, where they gave up the search and turned backward.<sup>2</sup>

In 1769 Portalo, entering the territory of California below San Diego, traveled through the rich valleys of the Pacific slope to the region of San Francisco.<sup>3</sup>

In 1776-77, Dominguez and Escalante were exploring some of the more rugged sections of our mountain regions.

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<sup>1</sup> See F. W. Hodge's statement, footnote p. 17, *infra*, that the fortieth degree of latitude in question was at that time equivalent to the thirty-eighth degree.—ED.

<sup>2</sup> For a sketch of these expeditions see "French Pathfinders" (Johnson) pp. 316-18; also South Dakota Historical Collections, v. 2, pt. 1, pp. 115, 118, 119.—ED.

<sup>3</sup> See *Early Western Travels*, v. 18, p. 283, note, for an account of Gaspar de Portalo's expedition.—ED.

Starting from Santa Fe they traveled westward through northern Arizona to a point in or near the southeastern corner of Nevada and thence in a northeastern course through the mountainous regions of southern Utah and on to a point nearly as far north as the south line of Wyoming, thence east and southeast through portions of Colorado and back into New Mexico.<sup>4</sup>

The Commercial Company, organized for the discovery of the nations of the Upper Missouri, in its three expeditions led by Clanmorgan and James Mackay in 1794-5, made extensive surveys of the Missouri river and tributaries as far north as the forty-seventh degree, in the vicinity of Bismarck, North Dakota.<sup>5</sup>

All these explorers by land added to the incentives of later brave spirits to make history for our western civilization. Add to these those who sailed our western waters following the Pacific coast and leaving no trail upon the trackless deep, but leaving impressions never to be obliterated from the mind by their reports of these wonderful regions and we have a background for our history as rich and varied as any country on the globe.

These, all of the eighteenth century, may be classed with the dreamers whose discoveries form our wonderful background of history; and yet, with few exceptions, they accomplished nothing practical towards the building up of civilization, and their work has perished, except so far as

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<sup>4</sup> See *History of Utah* (Bancroft), pp. 8-18. According to an accompanying map, the route of the explorers extended no farther north than Utah Lake.—ED.

<sup>5</sup> Zeno Trudeau, lieutenant-governor of Upper Louisiana, urged the organization of the Spanish Commercial Company for the purpose of discovery and trade on the upper Missouri. James Mackay was a member of an expedition which left St. Louis in August, 1795, under the auspices of the company, the discovery of the Pacific ocean being one of its objects. (*History of Missouri* (Houck), v. 2, pp. 58, 70-71); also *Annals of St. Louis 1804-1821* (Billon), p. 9; *South Dakota Historical Collections*, v. 1, p. 373; *ibid.*, v. 3, p. 379.—ED.



they have served as examples for the practical generation following. With the beginning of the nineteenth century came what we might call the semi-practical dreamers; for, though largely controlled by dreams of gold and adventure, these expeditions contained many practical men who, seeing the value of the rich soils and varied resources of the country, dropped out by the way, forming colonies and settlements which became the basis of our practical western civilization.

The Mormons are unique, not alone because of their peculiar doctrine, which it is not the purpose of this paper to discuss, but because it was not the love of gold, glory or adventure that caused them to join the company of pathfinders. Passing over their advent into the west—into Missouri in 1831—their finding uncongenial surroundings there and subsequently in the state of Illinois, and the murder of their leading men in June, 1844, we find they became pathfinders in their search for a location where they could dwell in peace. Their advent into the world was received much as was the infant's by its elder brother who was led into the mother's room to greet the new arrival. He looked at it for a few minutes then exclaimed: "We didn't need that!" But room had to be made for the little fellow whether he was needed or not. So the Mormons, whether needed and worthy or not, they have made their place in history, so that now, neither the history of our western civilization, nor the history of the United States nor of the world can be written without recognizing them.

In August, 1844, a company of these people under the leadership of James Emmett left Nauvoo, Illinois, and, following up the courses of the Mississippi and Iowa rivers, wintered in the vicinity of State Center, Iowa. The next spring, over the then trackless prairies of Iowa, they proceeded westward into what is now South Dakota until their progress was impeded by the swollen condition of the

Missouri and Dakota rivers, and so the succeeding winter was spent in Vermillion. In the spring of 1846 they sent emissaries back to Nauvoo who returned with the intelligence that the main body was on its way westward and would cross the Missouri river somewhere about Sarpy's old trading point. This caused them to move again, this time southward, following the course of the Missouri river, I think on the east side, until they made a junction with the main body in the vicinity of Council Bluffs, Iowa.

In 1845 another colony of these people, under Lyman Wight, one of the twelve apostles, leaving Black River, Wisconsin, a hundred miles above Prairie du Chien, drifted down the river on rafts of lumber to a point near Davenport, Iowa, and, there exchanging lumber for outfits, passed through Iowa in a southwest direction, through northwest Missouri, Kansas and Indian Territory into Texas, where they founded settlements in Travis, Gillespie, Burnet and Bandera counties.

The general exodus from Nauvoo began early in 1846 and passed through the southern counties of Iowa, making settlements in Decatur and Union counties, and established Winter Quarters on what is now the site of Florence, Nebraska, just above Omaha.

A vanguard was formed of the James Emmett company, before mentioned, and a company under Bishop George Miller. On July 7, 1846, this vanguard crossed the Missouri river with instructions to winter near Grand Island on the Platte river, but at the Pawnee village below Fremont they were visited by some Ponka chiefs who told them of good range for cattle on the Running Water, or Niobrara river. Bishop Miller, under the impression that the Ponka knew more about the country than Brigham Young, turned northward and wintered in the lands of the Ponka. In the spring of 1847 they returned to Winter Quarters, where James Emmett and his followers became identified with the

main exodus to the west, while George Miller disagreed with the constituted authorities and proceeded south to join the Lyman Wight colony in Texas. The company under the leadership of Brigham Young, as is well known, followed up the north side of the Platte river which they crossed at Fort Laramie and struck the Oregon Trail, following it to the Rocky mountains. From the crossing of the Loup to Fort Laramie, they made their own road, though from a point just west of the east line of Deuel county, Nebraska, they paralleled the Oregon Trail on the opposite side of the river.

All along the path of those Mormon parties through Iowa and Nebraska there were left men who were dissatisfied with the administration of the leaders. These formed the nucleus of a protesting organization and made homes on what was then esteemed the desert, and also formed the beginning of many a pioneer settlement which turned attention to the cultivation of the virgin soil. I mention the Mormons particularly because the public is less acquainted with them than with others. Not from the Mormons alone, but from many of these pioneer companies of travelers have come the sturdy sons of toil. They have learned that there is more profit in the golden harvest than in the yellow dust for which the dreamer sought. To them we are indebted for the existence of our prosperous cities and towns, our smiling fields and richly laden orchards.

Let us mark the trails of the dreamer so that we can follow with unerring certainty the footprints made on the old Spanish, Santa Fe, Oregon and other trails, while the more splendid monument of western civilization shall commemorate the deeds of the practical men who built our factories, our farms, our railroads, our churches, our schools, colleges, universities, and other evidences of advancing civilization.



## AN INTERESTING HISTORICAL DOCUMENT

BY ALBERT WATKINS

Below is a copy of a letter which I recently found in the collections of the Historical Society at Des Moines, Iowa. Thomas B. Cuming is still remembered by some of the oldest residents of Nebraska as the first secretary of the territory and the first real governor. Governor Burt died on the 18th of October, 1854, after having held the office nominally for two days only, when Secretary Cuming succeeded him according to a provision of the organic law, as acting governor. He continued in that office until the appointment of Governor Izard, February 20, 1855. The designation of Omaha as the first capital of the territory was directly due to Acting Governor Cuming's Napoleonic management.

Governor Cuming's wife was a sister of the late Frank Murphy of Omaha.

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Council Bluff City  
Nov. 30, -54

Dear Genl.

The county named after you in this territory extends from a point 60 miles west of the Missouri to the west boundary of U. S. lands (the 101° west longitude) bounded north by the Platte river, & south by the boundary between Kansas & Nebraska. It has the largest area of any county in the territory, and with the others is subject to alteration or abrogation by the Legislature.

I shall send you, before long, a more substantial token of regard, in the shape of a certificate of stock in the future

Capitol—a slight memento of a friendship whose expression, with me, to all my friends, is moderateed only by circumstances.

In haste, Truly yrs —

(Hon. Geo. W. Jones)

T. B. Cuming

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George W. Jones, to whom the letter is addressed, was a United States senator from Iowa at the time in question. The other senator from Iowa was Augustus C. Dodge, and Bernhart Henn was the member of the House of Representatives from the Council Bluffs district. These three were perhaps the most active lieutenants of Stephen A. Douglas in pushing through the bill for the territorial organization of Nebraska, and doubtless Cuming was under obligations to his "dear friend" Jones for his appointment as secretary of the territory.

On the 10th of December, 1854, Acting Governor Cuming issued an order for the organization of Jones county, but, presumably, because it was ascertained that there were no people there to organize, the order was not executed. On the 26th of January, 1856, the legislature authorized the organization of Jones county, but the authority was not acted upon until September 28, 1864. On the 18th of February, 1867, Jones county was added to Jefferson county by an act of the legislature. Jones county was coextensive with the present Jefferson county. The original Jefferson county is now Thayer county.

So long as, according to vicious custom, our counties commonly had to be named after politicians, we should all be grateful, I think, that the name of a politician of the very first class was in this case substituted for that of a politician of the second class; but the judicious will continue indefinitely to grieve that the many available and musical local names, Indian and others, should have been neglected for the politician preference at all.

## MEMORABILIA—GEN. G. M. DODGE

BY ALBERT WATKINS

On the 30th day of December, 1909, I interviewed General Grenville M. Dodge at his home in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Though seventy-nine years of age, he was physically vigorous and his memory seemed to me to be remarkably clear. For an account of his western Indian campaigns in 1864 and 1865 he referred me to Reports of Indian Wars of 1865, War of the Rebellion, vol. 48, pts. 1 and 2,—serial Nos. 101-102. General Dodge engaged actively in the project of constructing a Pacific railroad for as much as ten years before the passage of the act of 1862, which provided for the building of the Union Pacific railroad. He is intimately acquainted with the movements, political or otherwise, toward that great purpose. He is positively of the opinion that no well defined railroad interest or organization, prospective or otherwise, undertook to influence or encourage Stephen A. Douglas or other political leaders in their struggle for procuring the territorial organization of Nebraska. He says that there was no such movement sufficiently well defined before the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill to warrant any effort toward obtaining political influence of the kind in question. This opinion of General Dodge corresponds with that which I have always held.

In his Indian campaign of December, 1864, General Dodge opened the overland route across the plains which had been closed by the hostile Indians. The Arapaho, Cheyenne and Sioux were the hostile tribes, that first named being the fiercest and most aggressive. General



Dodge thinks that the peace policy of the federal government, which withdrew his army from the Indian campaign in 1865 at a time when there was a good prospect of soon subduing the Indians and in that way establishing lasting peace, was ill-advised and wrong, and that the great loss of property and life, culminating in the Custer massacre, was the legitimate fruit of that mistaken policy. According to the attitude of the local newspapers at the time, the peace policy was generally questioned or condemned by the people of the plains country.

During this Indian campaign General Dodge named Fort Caspar, Wyoming, after Lieutenant Caspar Collins when he was killed by Indians, July 27, 1865.<sup>1</sup> Fort Caspar was a stockade fortification at the Platte bridge, a low, floating structure, built by the soldiers of his army. It was situated at, or near, the point where the Mormons crossed the North Platte river on their way to Salt Lake City.

In 1865 General Dodge and his brother, Nathan P. Dodge, who also resided at Council Bluffs, lived in a cabin on the Elkhorn river about six miles above the present town of Elkhorn, which is a station on the Union Pacific railroad. Their farm or ranch lay alongside the California trail.

In 1853 General Dodge assisted Peter A. Dey in running the line of the Mississippi and Missouri—now called the Rock Island—railroad. In 1854 he threw his influence in favor of the Mosquito creek entrance to the valley of the Missouri river instead of the Pigeon creek route. The former route was favored by Cook and Sargent, capitalists, of Davenport, Iowa, who were backing the enterprise. They had interests at Florence, Nebraska, and afterward

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<sup>1</sup> Coutant's History of Wyoming, v. 1, p. 478, copies the order of Major General John Pope, dated November 21, 1865, naming "the military post situated at Platte river bridge, between Deer and Rock creeks," Fort Caspar.

owned the "wild cat" bank at that place. They intended that the road should eventually cross the river there; but General Dodge's influence prevailed, and the road came into Council Bluffs, and its trains now cross to Omaha as a result of his decision.

General Dodge said that the claim, much exploited at the time, that the rock bottom of the river at Florence made a much easier and less expensive place for a railroad bridge was entirely without foundation in fact, because, as he ascertained, the alleged rock bottom was not stable enough to maintain the weight of a bridge with a current of water flowing under the stratum of rock. General Dodge also contends that there was no virtue in the same condition in favor of a crossing at Bellevue; that the only practical advantage of the rock bottom was to tend to prevent the shifting of the current at those places.<sup>2</sup>

General Dodge made the first reconnoissance for the discovery of a line for the Pacific railroad west of the Missouri river. At the instance of Henry Farnham, after whom Farnham street, Omaha, was named, General Dodge went up the Platte Valley in 1861 on the business in question. During his Indian campaign of 1865-66 he continued his investigations for the route for a Pacific railroad. In 1864 he discovered the west side of the pass through the Rocky mountains, which the Union Pacific subsequently followed, and in 1865 he found the pass on this side. The grade of this passage was much more favorable than that of Cheyenne pass, about twenty miles above, or of the South pass. He named the new passage way "Sherman Pass" and had it accurately surveyed in 1866. His discovery of that route was not made known until the year last named.

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<sup>2</sup> Professor Barbour, head geologist University of Nebraska, is very skeptical as to this statement that the rock bottom was not stable and that water flowed just below it.

General Dodge says that at the time he and his brother lived on their ranch on the Elkhorn the Pawnee Loup had a regular village on the Beaver, near the place where the town of Genoa was afterward built. His brother, Nathan P. Dodge, had some doubt as to the accuracy of the general's memory upon this point. He himself supposed that the Pawnee were all settled at the village near Fremont.



# A STUDY IN THE ETHNOBOTANY OF THE OMAHA INDIANS

BY MELVIN RANDOLPH GILMORE, M. A.

[A thesis submitted by Mr. Gilmore to the faculty of the University of Nebraska as part requirement for the degree of Master of Arts—June, 1909.]

This paper is intended to be a preliminary report of plants native to Nebraska, used in any way by the indigenous population of our state, in particular the people of the Omaha tribe; of the uses made of the native plants, methods of gathering and preparing, together with folk-notice of any plants not used; and also of native or introduced plants cultivated by the people before the advent of the white man. My purpose is to demonstrate the natural resources of our state and the resourcefulness of her native people. It may also serve to suggest the domestication of plants which might be valuable acquisitions to our gardens and orchards and which have the important property of being already adjusted to the conditions of our soil and climate.

It would be a most interesting and instructive exercise to draw a mental picture of the economic conditions of this region before there came the varied and abundant crops of introduced cereals, vegetables and fruits which may be cultivated anywhere in our latitude, together with the great variety of products which our greatly improved transportation facilities bring to our hand daily from the most distant places in all zones. We can scarcely imagine what the conditions of sustenance would be here if everything of origin foreign to Nebraska were eliminated.

It is my purpose to preserve, so far as possible, a knowledge of the uses of plants native to our soil, in a stage

of culture and a set of conditions now vanished forever from the hills and valleys and plains of our state. The prompt prosecution of this work and its early accomplishment are very important and much to be desired, for the reason that the old people who alone possess this knowledge are year by year becoming fewer in number, and before long will all be gone, and with them, unless it be now recorded, will pass away all certain knowledge of the old-time lore. For the young people's time and attention are occupied in the schools of the white man and in learning his arts and in the practice of the same in making their way and filling their places as fellow citizens, neighbors and competitors with the white man, so that they have neither time, opportunity nor inclination to learn the things pertaining to a former time and conditions very different and now superseded. But, much as has been lost already, a vast amount of information is still available which can now be easily obtained by one who is in the confidence of the Indians, but which will soon be utterly lost to science unless prompt action be taken to preserve it.

I found it difficult to obtain information as to the uses of plants in the industries and arts, which at first seems strange, but will not seem so when we consider that for more than half a century the Omaha have been limited to the bounds of their reservation—Thurston county, Nebraska—and that for that period or longer their industries have been decadent and their products have been replaced by those of the white man. On the other hand, I was somewhat surprised at the store of information that is to be had as to the medical uses of plants; still perhaps that is not to be counted strange when we take note that among ourselves folk-remedies persist long after the rise of medical science.

In my endeavor to obtain and record items of information on this subject I have at all times met the most courteous

treatment on the part of all Omaha whom I interrogated, and with willing response to the full extent of their ability to serve my needs. All members of the tribe with whom I have come in contact have been kind, generous and patient in all efforts to aid me in my work, whether by directly imparting knowledge when they were able, or by referring me to those who could give certain information, by interpreting for me in talking with old people who could not speak English, by inviting me to ceremonials of their secret societies, to social gatherings; and in all other ways I was treated with uniform courtesy and hospitality. Among the many to whom I owe my thanks I would especially mention Mrs. Susan La Flesche-Picotte, M. D., her sister, Mrs. Walter Diddock, of Walthill, Nebraska, and their mother, Mrs. Mary La Flesche. Mrs. La Flesche is the widow of Joseph La Flesche or Iron Eye (*INSHTA-MANZA*), the last head chief of the Omaha. I owe much also to Mr. Francis La Flesche, of Washington, D. C., and his brother, Mr. Carey La Flesche, sons of Joseph La Flesche, to Mr. Alfred Blackbird, a great-grandson of Black Bird (*WASHINGA-SABE*), who was head chief of the Omaha about one hundred years ago. Mr. Cyrus Blackbird (*TOWAGAHE-ZHINGA*, Little Village Maker), in recognition of my work, did me the honor to confer upon me the name of his great ancestor, *WAZHINGA-SABE*. I am much indebted also to Mr. George Miller, to Mr. and Mrs. Noah La Flesche, to *WAJAPA*, his son, Francis Fremont, and daughter, Miss Nettie Fremont, and others of the tribe.

The Omaha are a tribe of the great Siouan stock which includes the confederacy of the ten tribes of the Sioux nation, and in addition to these the tribes of the Assiniboin, Omaha, Ponka, Osage, Kansa, Kwapa, Iowa, Oto, Crow, Missouri, Minetari, Winnebago, Hidatsa, Tutelo, Biloxi, Catawba, and others. The territorial seat of the Omaha was comprised within the region bounded on the north



by the *NIOBRARA* (Spreading water), on the east by the *NISHUDE* (Smoky Water, the Missouri River), on the south by the *NEBRASKA* (Flat-water or Flat River), which we call the Platte, and on the west by the stream which we call Shell creek. Their neighbors on the west were the Pawnee nation with whom they were in political alliance although of an alien stock. To the south their neighbors were of their own stock, the Oto, Osage and Missouri, while to the east were their kinsmen, the Iowa.

It is commonly thought that the aborigines of America subsisted almost wholly or very largely upon the products of the chase, but this is far from true, for many of the tribes were essentially agricultural. This is the more remarkable when we consider that these peoples passed, or were passing, directly from the hunter stage to the agricultural stage without coming by way of the commonly intermediate pastoral stage. And even the non-agricultural tribes made extensive use of wild seeds, fruits, berries, roots, and other vegetable products, either separately or in combinations, with or without meats, fish or fowl.

Now, taking up the particular uses of plants in domestic arts, I would mention first *Cornus asperifolia*, *MA<sup>N</sup>SÁ-ĤTĒ-HI*.<sup>1</sup> The straight shoots were used for arrow shafts as indicated by the name *MA<sup>N</sup>SA*, arrow; *ĤTĒ*, real; *HI*, plant. *Fraxinus viridis*, *TASHINA<sup>N</sup>GA-HI*, was also used for arrow shafts and for bows. Another wood

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<sup>1</sup> I have tried to render the sounds in the Omaha words approximately by the following principles:

1. All vowels to be given their sounds as in continental languages.
2. The <sup>N</sup> above the line, e. g., *MA<sup>N</sup>DE*, has a vanishing sound, somewhat like the French *n*.
3. A lengthened vowel is shown by doubling, e. g., *BUUDE*.
4. A consonant sound approximating the German *ch* or Greek *X* is shown by *Ĥ*, e. g., *ĤTE*.

It will be noted that the word *HI* recurs repeatedly in combinations, as *HAZI-HI*, *TASPA<sup>N</sup>-HI*. The word signifies plant. It is a general term covering herbs, shrubs, trees or vines.

used for bows was *Toxylon pomiferum*, ZHON-PAHÍDHA-DHA, which was imported by trade with tribes to the southward. For fish weirs several species of *Salix* were used. *Scirpus lacustris*, SA-HI, was used for matting. Baskets were made from *Salix fluviatilis* and *S. luteoseria*. *Ulmus americana* and *Quercus* spp. were used for mortars for corn, a section of the trunk having been hollowed out for the purpose by fire. Pipestems were made from *Fraxinus viridis*, the drilling being done by means of a soft stick dipped in water and sharp sand and twirled by hand. Pipestems, arrow shafts, bows and other implements and utensils of wood were smoothed and polished by rubbing with *Equisetum* spp., MANDE-IDHE-SHNAHA; MANDE, bow; IDHE-SHNAHA, to smooth.

It would be an interesting psychological study to account for the sacred or mystic character ascribed to certain plants used as ceremonial agents.

Of such I mention first *Lophophora williamsii* Coult. (*Echinocactus williamsii* Lem.) This is not a native of Nebraska and was not anciently used in Nebraska, but its use has in modern time been introduced from the southern tribes and ultimately from Mexico, where it was known and used immemorially. This is what has come to be commonly called the "mescal". The mescal was introduced into the Omaha tribe in the winter of 1906-7 by an Omaha returning from a visit to the Oto in Oklahoma. He had been much addicted to the use of alcoholics and was told by an Oto that this plant and the religious cult connected therewith would be a cure. On his return he sought the advice and help of the leader of the mescal society in the Winnebago tribe, the Winnebago being neighbors of the Omaha on a contiguous reservation. These men and a few others of the Omaha who also suffered from alcoholism formed a society which has increased in numbers and influence against much opposition till it includes more than

half of the tribe. The mescal plant and its cult appeal strongly to the Indian's sense of the mysterious and occult, and his appreciation of ceremonialism and symbolism. The Indian mind, being in that psychic stage which peoples all natural objects with spirits, quite naturally attributes to the mescal plant most wonderful properties and powers. As the Semitic and Aryan minds have found it possible to conceive that deity may be incarnated in an animal—in a human body, so to the Indian mind it seems just as reasonable to conceive that deity may dwell in a plant body. So he pays it divine honors and makes prayers to, or in connection with it and eats it or drinks a decoction of it in order to appropriate the divine spirit, to induce the good, and exorcise the evil, making its use analogous to the Christian use of bread and wine in the eucharist.

James Mooney says: "The greatest of the Kiowa gods is the sun . . . . Next to the sun the buffalo and the 'señi' or peyote plant claim reverence, and these may be reduced to the same analysis, as the buffalo bull in his strength and majesty is regarded as the animal symbol of the sun, while the peyote, with its circular disk and its bright center, surrounded by white spots or rays, is its vegetal representative."<sup>2</sup> The same author in an article on "The Mescal Plant and Ceremony", says:

"The traders call it mescal . . . . The local Mexican name upon the Rio Grande is peyote, or pellote, from the old Aztec name, *peyotl*.<sup>3</sup> The use of the plant for medical and religious purposes is probably as ancient as the Indian occupancy of the region over which it grows. The ceremony lasts from twelve to fourteen hours, beginning about nine or ten o'clock and lasting sometimes till nearly noon the next day. The worshippers sit in a circle around the inside of the sacred tipi, with a blazing fire in the center.

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<sup>2</sup> Calendar History of the Kiowa Indians, 17th Annual Report Bureau of American Ethnology, p. 237.

<sup>3</sup> Therapeutic Gazette, Detroit, January, 1896, p. 7.



The exercises open with a prayer by the leader who then hands to each man four mescals which he takes and eats in quick succession, first plucking out the small tuft of down from the center. After this first round, the leader takes the rattle while his assistant takes the drum, and together they sing the first song four times, at the same time beating the drum and shaking the rattle. The drum and rattle are then handed to the next two, and so the song goes on round the circle. I know from experience that the mescal is a powerful stimulant and enables one to endure great physical strains without injurious reactions, in which it seems to differ from all other known stimulants."

In *Merck's Index*, 1907, p. 66, I find this account of mescal:

"Seed of *Anhalonium lewinii* (*Lophophora lewinii*)—Habitat: Mexico and southern United States. Etymology: Greek,  $\Phi\epsilon\rho\acute{\epsilon}\iota\nu$ , a crest or tuft, and  $\lambda\acute{o}\phi\omicron\varsigma$  to bear, i. e., tufted or crested. 'Mescal' is the Mexican name for the plant. The mescal button is top shaped and bears a ring of leaves bent around a tuft of short yellowish white filaments or hairs one-half inch in diameter. The button is one to one and one-half inches in diameter, one-fourth inch thick, with convex under surface, brittle and hard when dry, but soft when moist, very bitter, disagreeable taste and peculiar disagreeable odor.—Constit. *Anhalonine*,  $C_{12}H_{15}NO_3$ ; *mescaline*,  $C_{11}H_{17}NO_3$ ; *anhalinodine*,  $C_{12}H_{15}NO_3$ ; and *lophophorine*,  $C_{12}H_{17}NO_3$ . Cardiac and respiratory stimulant.—Uses: Neurasth., hyster., insomn., angina pect., and asthmatic dysnea. On being chewed the buttons cause a form of intoxication accompanied by most wonderful visions, remarkably beautiful and varied kaleidoscopic changes, and a sensation of increased physical ability, the physical and psychic functions however remaining unimpaired."

For incense *Juniperus virginiana*, MAZI-HI, and *Savastana odorata*, PEZHE ZONSTA, have been of immemorial use. *Juniperus* was used on the hot stones in the vapor bath, especially in purificatory rites. By the "MANCHU-IDHE-EDHE" (the bear-favored, i. e., those

whose totemic vision had been the bear) the cedar branch was used as a badge and in connection with their sacred ceremonies. J. O. Dorsey says:

"In the Osage traditions cedar symbolizes the tree of life. When a woman is initiated into the secret society of the Osages, the officiating man of her gens gives her four sips of water, symbolizing, so they say, the river flowing by the tree of life, and then he rubs her from head to foot with cedar needles, three times in front, three times at her back, and three times on each side."<sup>4</sup>

Kroeber says, in speaking of customs in connection with death: "Immediately after the burial the relatives bathe because they have touched the corpse. For several nights they burn cedar leaves, the smoke or smell of which keeps the spirit away."<sup>5</sup> George A. Dorsey, writing of the sun dance ceremony,<sup>6</sup> and in discussing the symbolism of the seven trees used in the sun dance of the Arapaho,<sup>7</sup> says of the cedar: "It is always green, is durable, pleasing to the eye, the gift of God. The twigs are used as incense." *Populus sargentii*, MAA-ZHAN, literally, "cottonwood", was used for the sacred pole and for the poles of the "buffalo tent", i. e., the temple of the divine powers of sustenance. It should be said, however, that use was not confined to the species *sargentii*, for any poplar was used; but *sargentii* is common in the territory of the Omaha.

Ritualistic use was made of *Artemisia gnaphaloides* especially, and, failing that species, other species of the same genus were used. It is commonly associated with sacred things and in rites of lustration for man or beast, as, if by accident a man should touch the sacred tent, or if a horse in grazing should touch it, in either case the man or the horse must be bathed with an infusion of *Artemisia*.

<sup>4</sup> Siouan Cults., p. 391.

<sup>5</sup> The Arapaho, p. 17.

<sup>6</sup> Field-Columbian Museum Pub. Anthropol. Series, May, 1903, p. 300.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 121.

The display of sprays of the plant would indicate the sacred character of the article or place with which it was connected; thus when I entered the tent of meeting of the Mescal society and saw the ground decked with a covering of the plant in a circle about the fireplace in the center, I recognized that here its character as a symbol of sacredness had been transferred to the paraphernalia of this exotic cult. It is noteworthy that in the Hopi tribe a similar meaning was attached to the same plant. J. W. Fewkes says: "A sprig of this plant (*Artemisia frigida*) is attached to the paho or prayer emblem and is regarded as efficacious in petition for water."<sup>8</sup> *Juniperus virginiana*, MAZI-HI; *Savastana odorata*, PEZHE-ZONSTA; *Populus sargentii*, MAA-ZHU<sup>N</sup>; *Zea mays*, WAHABE; *Typha latifolia*, WAHABAGASKONDHE; *Fraxinus viridis*, TASHINA<sup>N</sup>-GA-HI; *Salix* spp., THIHSPA<sup>N</sup>, were used in various of the old time rituals, and now in modern time *Lophophora williamsii* has been used as has already been described. *Salix* spp. was used in the ritual of mourning. Young men, friends of the deceased or of the mourners, on the day of burial appeared before the lodge as the funeral procession was about to start for the grave and, having incised the left forearm, they inserted twigs of willow down which trickled their blood as a token of their sympathy with the living while they sang the tribal song to the spirit, a song of joyous melody intended to cheer the spirit of the deceased as he entered on the last long journey, J. O. Dorsey says:

"The Omaha have two sacred trees, the ash and the cedar. The ash is connected with the beneficent powers. Part of the sacred pole of the Omaha and Ponka was made of ash, the other part of cottonwood. The stems of the 'NINIBA WAWA<sup>N</sup>', or 'sacred pipes of friendship', are

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<sup>8</sup> A Contribution to Ethnobotany, American Anthropology, v. 9, (1896), p. 21.



made of ash. But the cedar is linked with the destructive agencies, thunder, lightning, wars.”<sup>9</sup>

The leaf of *Typha latifolia* was used as one of the required articles in dressing the sacred pipes.

One of the tribal fetishes of the Kansa was the sacred clamshell, kept wrapped in five coverings, as follows:

1. The innermost covering, the bladder of a buffalo bull.
2. A covering made of the spotted skin of a fawn.
3. A covering made of braided stems of *Scirpus lacustris*.
4. A very broad piece of deerskin.
5. The outermost covering, made of braided hair from the head of a buffalo bull.

Of the esthetic uses of plants it may first be stated as a rather notable fact that the Omaha never use flowers of any kind, either in personal adornment, in symbolism, or in mortuary customs. As a perfume for hair oil the petals of *Rosa arkansana*, WAZHIDE-HI, were used, and still more commonly for the same purpose the leaves of *Monarda fistulosa*, PEZHE-PA. Young men used as a perfume the seeds of *Aquilegia canadense*, INA-BTHO<sup>N</sup>-KITHE-SABE-HI, the method of preparation being by trituration with the teeth, the paste being then placed among the blankets or other effects. The fruits of *Xanthoxylum americana*, PAHIDHADHA or ZHO<sup>N</sup>-PAHIDHADHA, were also used as a perfume by the young men. *Galium triflorum*, WAU PEZHE or WAU-INA-MA<sup>N</sup>KAN<sup>N</sup>, was used as a perfume by the women only. For this purpose it was gathered and used in its green state by tucking into the girdle. *Savastana odorata*, PEZHE ZONSTA, was of general use as perfume. The plants here named are the sources of some of the perfumes of the Omaha, and it should be noted that there are no heavy scents among

<sup>9</sup> J. O. Dorsey, Siouan Cults., 11th Ann. Rep. Bur. Am. Ethnol., p. 390.

them, but that all are of a fine, delicate, elusive, evanescent fragrance, a mere suggestion of an odor and yet pervasive.

*Sanguinaria canadensis* was used as a red stain for the skin.

Now to speak of the general utilities: the framework of the vapor bath lodges was made of young poles of various species of *Salix*. The inner bark of *Tilia americana*, *HINDE-HI*, was used for ropes and cordage and for baskets, as also the inner bark of *Ulmus fulva*, *EZHON* *ZHIDE* or *EZHON* *GTHIGHIDE*. Combs or hair-brushes were made by firmly binding together the grains of *Stipa spartea*, *MIKA HI* (*MIKA*, comb; *HI*, plant). Sinew was used for the binding substance, the points being broken or burned off, the grains forming the teeth, the awns, bent back, making attachment. As an agent for giving a black dye in tanning leather, the twigs of *Acer saccharinum*, *WENUN* *SHABATHE HI*, (plant-to-make-black), were used. The twigs and bark, together with an iron stained clay from the lower portion of the Pierre shales exposed along the Niobrara river in northern Nebraska, were mixed with tallow and roasted in a pot. On submitting a sample of the clay obtained from an Indian to Prof. N. A. Bengtson of the department of geography and economic geology, University of Nebraska, he returned the geological data upon it as just stated. The same being submitted to Dr. Samuel Avery of the department of chemistry, he supplied the information that in connection with the bark ferrous-tannic acid is formed, and on exposure to the air ferric-tannic acid is formed, which is a still more intense black. He stated further that the same principle is at present used commercially in the manufacture of black ink. Snow shoes, *SEHINBE*, were made with rims of hickory, *NO<sup>N</sup>SI HI*, tied with thongs of rawhide woven across. A yellow dye was made from the leaf buds of *Populus sargentii*, *MAA ZHON*. A yellow dye was also made from the inner

bark of *Rhus glabra*, *MI<sup>N</sup>BDI-HI*. A black dye for porcupine quills was made from the bark of *Quercus rubra*, *BUUDE-HI*.

Passing to the native food plants, I mention first roots, bulbs and tubers. The bulbs and tops of *Allium spp.* were eaten both raw and cooked. The thickened roots of *Apios apios*, *NU*, were eaten after being boiled until the skin came off. The annual report of the commissioner of agriculture for 1870 says: "*Apios tuberosa*, on the banks of streams and in alluvial bottoms, is the true 'pomme de terre' of the French and the *MODO*, or wild potato, of the Sioux Indians and is used extensively as an article of diet . . . It should not be confounded with the groundnut of the south." *Helianthus tuberosa*, *PA<sup>N</sup>HE*, tubers were a common article of food. The thickened root of *Psoralea esculenta*, *NUGTHE*, was eaten fresh and raw or dried and cooked with soup. This is the root called "pomme blanche" and "pomme de prairie" by the French voyageurs. The annual report of the commissioner of agriculture for 1870 (p. 408), says: ". . . Indian turnip, *pomme de prairie* of the French, *TIPSINNAH* of the Sioux, who used it extensively. Generally the size of a hen's egg, of a regular ovoid shape . . . Indians of Kansas and Nebraska consider this root an especial luxury."

The tubers of *Sagittaria latifolia*, *SIN*, were cooked and furnished a farinaceous food. I have not found that any plants were used as salads or relishes. As a pot herb *Asclepias syriaca*, *WA<sup>H</sup>THA-HI*, was eaten at three stages. First, the young shoots were used much as we use the young sprouts of asparagus. Next, the inflorescences before the flower buds open are cooked as greens, and in the last stage the very young fruits are used in the same way. The bark of *Ulmus fulva*, *EZHON ZHIDE*, was cooked with rendering fat to give it a pleasant flavor, and also it was supposed that it gave the suet keeping quality. After



cooking in the fat the pieces of bark are much prized by the children as special titbits. The nuts of *Corylus americana*, *U<sup>N</sup>ZHINGA*, and *Juglans nigra*, *TDAGE*, were eaten plain or prepared by mixing with honey. The fruits of *Crataegus coccinea* and *C. mollis*, *TASPA<sup>N</sup>HI*, were eaten fresh from the hand by children and also sometimes by adults in case of famine. Logan creek in northeastern Nebraska is called *NI-TASPA<sup>N</sup>-BATE* by the Omaha in reference to the abundance of *Crataegus* growing thereon, *BATE* meaning groups or thickets. The fruits of *Ribes missouriensis*, *PEZI*; *Rubus occidentalis*, *AGATHUNKEMONGE-HI*; *Fragaria virginiana*, *BASHTE-HI*; *Morus rubra*, *ZHO<sup>N</sup>ZI*; and *Lepargyrea argentea*, *ZHO<sup>N</sup>HOJE WAZHIDE*, were eaten fresh and also dried for winter use. The fruits of *Prunus besseyi*, *NA<sup>N</sup>PA-TANGA*, were eaten fresh, those of *P. virginiana*, *NA<sup>N</sup>PA-ZHINGA*, were eaten fresh and also pounded up, pits and all, made into thin cakes, dried and used in winter with dried corn, or cooked alone with sugar. *P. americana*, *KANDE*, was eaten fresh, or, after being pitted, was dried for winter use. *Vitis riparia* and *V. vulpina*, *HAZI*, were eaten both fresh in season and dried for winter use. There is a certain wild bean which grows very generally over the continent from which the Omaha formerly obtained a considerable item of their alimentation. It is *Falcata comosa* (L.) They call the vine *HI<sup>N</sup>BTHI-HI* and the fruits *HI<sup>N</sup>BTHI ABE*. The plant grows most luxuriantly and fruits profusely. From the aerial, conspicuous flowers a great abundance of legumes is produced, each containing several grayish mottled beans about the form and size of lentils, but from geotropic, non-twining, leafless vines at the base of the plant are produced subterranean legumes each of which contains one bean which may attain a diameter of seventeen millimeters. The subterranean legumes are produced from cleistogamous flowers. The geotropic runners on which they are produced

are leafless and colorless and form a perfect network on the surface of the ground beneath the twining vines. The subterranean beans are gathered by the field mice and stored by them in quantities from a quart to several quarts in a place. These stores were sought by the women, and after soaking the membranaceous hulls were rubbed off and the beans were boiled, affording an article of food similar in taste and quality to the common kidney bean.

The acorn most used by the Omaha for food was that of *Quercus rubra*, *BUUDE HI*. All other species of *Quercus* were without differentiation called by them *TASHKA-HI*. The acorns were freed from tannic acid by boiling with wood ashes. *Q. rubra* is also called by the Omaha *NU<sup>N</sup>BA NAĤADI*, in reference to its characteristic in burning to flame again after it has apparently burned down to coals—*NU<sup>N</sup>BA*, twice; *NAĤADI*, flames.

The plant of first importance in aboriginal use was *zea mays*,<sup>10</sup> which by all evidence of tradition, history, archaeology, meteorology, ethnology, philology and botany, had central and southern Mexico as its place of origin, as is so well shown by Harshberger in "Maize: A Botanical and Economic Study".<sup>11</sup> But prior to the coming of Columbus it had been artificially distributed and cultivated over almost all the tropical and temperate regions of the western hemisphere. For the gift of this grain the whole modern

<sup>10</sup> Brinton, "Myths of the New World" N. Y. 1873, says: "It (maize) was found in cultivation from the southern extremity of Chile to the fortieth parallel of north latitude, beyond which the low temperature renders it an uncertain crop."

Le Page du Pratz, Histoire de la Louisiane, Tome III, p. 342, Paris, 1758: "Le Mahiz . . . est la nourriture principale des Peuples de l'Amerique."

Lafitau, Moeures des Sauvages Ameriquains, Tome III, p. 57, Paris, 1724: "La mais . . . lequel est le fondement de la nourriture de presque toutes les Nations sedentaires d'un bout de l'Amerique a l'autre."

<sup>11</sup> Harshberger, v. 1, No. 2, Contributions from the Botanical Laboratories of the University of Pennsylvania: "Maize originated in all probability . . . north of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and south of the 22d degree north latitude, near the ancient seat of the Maya tribes."

world is indebted to those remote and obscure toilers who labored all their lives and for many generations without thought of their incalculable service to humanity or of the richness of their contribution to the world's storehouse. But too often does it so occur that we complacently accept the good things that have come to us and to our times, congratulating ourselves upon our possessions and accomplishments, and too seldom do we remember to bestow credit where it is due for legacies we have received from remote times and alien peoples.

Another cereal which, though not cultivated, was by some tribes artificially distributed and formed a staple food for the tribes living in its range, was wild rice, *Zizania aquatica*. This formerly grew in the northeast part of the territory of the Omaha along the Missouri river to a very limited extent, but has been extinct there for many years. having been exterminated by the pasturing of cattle. It still grows in the ponds of the sand-hill region. The Omaha called it *SI<sup>N</sup>WANINDE*. Of plants used for food my informants would often say: "We used to use this, but we don't now. Before the white man came we had to eat whatever we could get of just what grew in the country then."

They had the beginnings of agriculture, cultivating many varieties of flint corn, flour corn, dent corn, sweet corn, and popcorn. They also raised beans, squashes, pumpkins, gourds, melons, and a kind of tobacco which was different from the tobacco of commerce to-day. They say it was milder. These crops they cultivated by means of digging sticks and hoes made of the shoulder blade of the buffalo fastened with rawhide to a wooden handle. For the rest of their vegetal food they depended upon wild fruits, seeds, nuts, roots, tubers and fungi.

Sugar and syrup were obtained by boiling down the sap of *Acer saccharinum*, *WENU<sup>N</sup>-SHABATHE-HI*, and of



*A. negundo*, ZHABATE-ZHO<sup>N</sup>-HI. Indeed the derivation of sugar from the maple tree is another of the contributions of the North American Indian to the benefit of the world. All the tribes dwelling in regions in which grew *Acer saccharum*, *A. saccharinum* and *A. negundo* practiced this art, and European colonists learned it from them. In this connection it should be said that the Omaha word for sugar is ZHO<sup>N</sup>-NI—ZHO<sup>N</sup>, wood, and NI, water, showing that they had a word for sugar, and also indicating the source of the article before contact with the whites.

Of the use of fungi, MIKAIÍ ĤTHÍ, as food, it may be said that meadow mushrooms were roasted, and certain mushrooms, TENI ĤAGTHE ZHA EGA, growing on decaying wood, were boiled and seasoned with salt. To our mind, perhaps, the most curious fungal food is *Ustilago maydis*, WAHABE-ĤTHÍ (literally "corn sores"). This was cooked and eaten before the spores matured, "before it turns black", as my informant said. They say it tastes somewhat like corn and is very palatable.

The Omaha had no alcoholic drinks previous to the coming of the white men, but they made hot aqueous drinks from the leaves of a number of plants, including *Ceanothus americana*, TABÊ-HI; *Verbena stricta*, PEZHE MA<sup>N</sup>KAN<sup>N</sup>; *Mentha canadense*, PEZHE BTHO<sup>N</sup>, (PEZHE, herb; BTHO<sup>N</sup>, fragrant); *Rubus occidentalis*, AGATHU<sup>N</sup>KAMU<sup>N</sup>GI-HI; and the young twigs of *Crataegus coccinea*, or of *C. mollis*, TASPAN<sup>N</sup>HI.

Tobacco seems to have been firmly interwoven in the ceremonial life of all the tribes of Indians. In the old time no journey was undertaken by the Omaha without making an offering of tobacco in the following formula. The pipe was extended with the mouthpiece toward the sun with these words: "Ho, Mysterious Power, you who are the Sun. Here is tobacco. I wish to follow your course. Grant that it may be so. Cause me to meet whatever is good for me

and to pass around whatever is bad for me. In all the world you control everything that moves, including human beings. When you decide for man that his last day on earth is come, it is so. It cannot be delayed. Therefore, O Mysterious Power, I ask a favor of you." In the ceremony of the Hako among the Pawnee, corresponding to the Wawan Waan, or Pipes of Fellowship ceremony of the Omaha and the Calumet of some other tribes, tobacco holds a very important ceremonial place. In Part III of the seventh ritual in this ceremonial "The son takes a pinch of tobacco from the bowl of the pipe and passes it along the stem and offers it as the priest directs . . . . When the pinch of tobacco has been offered to the powers above, it is placed on the earth." In Newport's Discoveries in Virginia (1608) the writer says: "They sacrifice tobacco to the sun, fayre picture or a harmfull thing,—as a swoord or peece also: they strinckle some into the water in the morning before they wash."

One of the cultivated plants of the Omaha, as also of the other plains tribes, was a species of *Nicotiana*. The Omaha have now many years since lost the seed of it, but they told me that sometimes on visits to some of the northern tribes they receive presents of it, which they are always glad to get because they prefer its mild quality to the common tobacco of commerce. They all agree on the characteristics of the plant, and they told me that the Arikara still cultivate it. I wrote to the agent of Fort Berthold Reservation, North Dakota, where the Arikara reside, inquiring about the plant. It was not known to any of the government employes that the Indians there had any such plant, but on inquiring they found it was true, and that it was grown by both Arikara and Grosventres. Mr. G. W. Hoffman, the agent, took the trouble to obtain for me some seed and specimens of the plant from a Gros-ventre by the name of Long Bear, a man seventy-three

years of age in 1908, who kindly supplied the material for the purpose of my investigation. By comparison I conclude that it is *Nicotiana quadrivalvis*, which is described as being found in Mexico. This agrees with the traditions of the origin of the Arikara, who are an offshoot of the Caddo stock, coming originally from Mexico by way of Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Nebraska and so to North Dakota. The other tribes of the Caddoan stock are Caddo, Hueco—from which Waco, Texas, is named—Wichita, and the Pawnee nation. The Omaha call the Arikara the Sand-hill Pawnee, referring to their relation to the Pawnee and to their former position in the sand-hills of Nebraska.

Another substance used for smoking, either alone or mixed with tobacco, was the inner bark of *Cornus amomum*, *NINÍGA-HI-ĤTÍ ZHIDE*. Straight growths of this shrub were cut and after scraping off the outer bark with a dull knife, the inner bark was scraped off which, after drying, was finely comminuted with a quantity of tobacco for smoking. It is commonly but erroneously said that Indians smoke the bark of "red willow". No species of *Salix* is ever used for smoking. The bark used for this purpose is, as just stated, that of *Cornus amomum*. When *NINÍGA-HI-ĤTI-ZHIDE* could not be obtained, the leaves of *Rhus glabra*, *MI<sup>N</sup>BDI-HI*, were used, being gathered for this purpose after they turned scarlet in autumn and prepared by stripping out the veins. The parenchymatous area of the leaf then made brittle by drying, was broken fine and used like the bark of *Cornus*.

For the medicinal uses of plants it is not necessary to the Indian's mind that there should be any connection between the physical and chemical properties of plants and of the human body. His notions of disease are thoroughly demonistic, and his notion of medicine is of something occult, of mysterious power, and with his animistic ideas of the universe there dwell mystic powers in everything in



Nature, both plant and animal, and in inanimate objects. Indeed the demonistic notion of disease is not so far distant from our own stage of civilization.

Dr. G. A. Stockwell, writing in *Popular Science Monthly*, 1866 (v. 29, p. 649), says:

"The medicine of the Indian is his religion and philosophy, and it comprises everything in Nature, real or imaginary, superstitious or occult . . . . The savage knows absolutely nothing of the relationships between cause and effect, of the action of the remedies as remedies, of physiological conditions and phenomena, or indeed of any agency not directly born of the occult."

Often the suggestion to the Indians of a plant as a remedial agent came from a dream or vision; and yet they have happened upon many remarkably useful therapeutic agents which have been adopted into our own *materia medica*, as, for example, *Echinacea angustifolia*, the uses of which the Indians of the plains have known for ages.

In Lloyd Brothers' Bulletin for 1907-8 they say: "In the year 1897 we introduced to the medical profession a preparation of *Echinacea angustifolia*, a western plant native to Nebraska and other sections of the northwest. . . . The credit for discovering the qualities of the drug belong, however, to Doctor Meyer, who had used it since 1870." Dr. D. T. Powelson, in a paper read at a meeting of the Eclectic Medical Society of Pennsylvania, says:

"The introduction of the remedy into professional practice is due conjointly to Dr. H. F. G. Meyer, of Pawnee City, Nebraska, and the late Professor King. Doctor Meyer had been using it for sixteen years previous to reporting it to Doctor King, his claim for it being as an antispasmodic and an antidote for blood poisoning; among his claims for it was also its action as an antidote for the poison of various insects and particularly to that of the rattlesnake."

I must say that the origin of most, if not all, so-called "Indian medicines" sold as nostrums by street venders and

others, lacks the slightest connection with any tribe of Indians; but the name Indian, having so large a place in the imagination and credulity of the common people, is used to foist upon the gullible buyers, to the mercenary advantage of the venders, articles either trivial or useless. Among the Omaha, and this is true also with other tribes, the efficacy of a plant as a remedy was believed to lie in its specific use by the properly authorized persons in connection with the prescribed songs, prayers and other religious ceremonies. A plant useful for medicine was the property of some individual or of one of the secret societies which pertained to the religious political organization of the tribe and could be used only by them or by their authority and upon the payment of a fee, but could not even be offered by the proprietor unless requested by the sufferer or his friends, otherwise there was no virtue or healing power.

Of plants used medicinally, one of the greatest importance is *Echinacea angustifolia*, called *I<sup>N</sup>SHTOGAĤTE-HI* in reference to its use for sore eyes; called also *MIKA EGA<sup>N</sup>TASHI*, in reference to the use of its spiny cone for a comb by children in play. In medicine the part used was the root, macerated and applied as an antidote for snake bites, stings, and all septic diseases. It was applied to the hands and arms by the "mystery man" as a local anaesthetic to deaden sensation so that they might remove pieces of meat from the boiling pot without flinching—thus manifesting their "supernatural power" and so obtaining influence over the credulous. Two kinds were distinguished as *NUGÁ*, male, and *MIGÁ*, female, the apparent differences being the size, *NUGÁ* being larger, the small size or *MIGÁ* being considered the efficient medicine.

It ought to be remembered that the Indian does not make specific distinctions in plants. He gives names to such as are useful to him in any way and to such as strike his fancy, while he ignores others which may be in the same

genus. On the other hand, if he makes the same use of two or more species of the same genus, he will call both by the same name; for example, the Omaha use the acorns of *Quercus rubra* for food. They call this tree *BUUDE HI*. They do not make so much use of the acorns of any other oak, though they may use the timber. So all oaks except *Q. rubra*, *BUUDE HI*, are by them indifferently called *TASHKA HI*. So with *Salix*, *Solidago* and other genera, specific differences may not be noted. This may explain any uncertainty of specific indication in my list. The leaves of *Amorpha canescens*, *TDE-HUN<sup>N</sup>TO<sup>N</sup>-HI*, were dried, powdered, and used to blow into cuts and open wounds, by their astringent property causing an incrustation. Also the very small ends of twigs were broken into pieces of five or six millimeters length and used as a *moxa*, being applied by sticking into the skin over a region affected with neuralgia or rheumatism and there burned. The fruits and roots of *Rhus glabra* were steeped together to make a wash for sores, probably their astringent quality being the agent sought. *Mentha canadensis*, *PEZHE-NUBTHO<sup>N</sup>-HI*, was used as a carminative. *Acorus calamus* (sweet flag), *MA<sup>N</sup>KAN<sup>N</sup>-NINIDA*, was used to the same effect, and also as a tonic, the rootstock being chewed at will, or triturated and given in doses.

For alleviation of colds in the head and for pain in any part, various plants were used in a manner of treatment called *ASHUDE-KITHE*. In this treatment the affected part was enveloped in a skin or blanket under which was placed a vessel of coals, and on the coals were placed some fat and the part of the plant to be used for medication. Thus the warm smoke of the root or other part of the plant was caused to permeate the affected part. For *ÁSHUDE-KITHE* the root of *Silphium perfoliatum*, *ZHABEHOHOHI*, was very commonly used. A decoction was made from the leaves of *Artemisia gnaphalodes*, *PEZHE HOTE*, for



use in bathing for fevers. The dried and powdered leaves of this plant were used for nasal hemorrhage, being applied by blowing into the nostrils. I suppose the astringent effect was sought, as well as the mechanical obstruction of the flow of blood, by the powder.

The root of *Caulophyllum thalictroides* (blue cohosh), *ZHU NAKADA TANGA MA<sup>N</sup>KA<sup>N</sup>*, was the favorite febrifuge. The name indicates the value ascribed to it in this use—*ZHU*, flesh or body; *NAKADA*, hot; *TANGA*, great; *MA<sup>N</sup>KA<sup>N</sup>*, medicine; altogether signifying the medicine for great or severe fever.

The inflorescences of *Oxalis stricta* (yellow sheep-sorrel), *HADE SATHE*, (sour grass), were used as a poultice for swellings. The fruits of *Rhus glabra* were used to make a poultice in case of poisoning. Dried and powdered they were used to blow into wounds and open sores for their astringent effect. The people were afraid to touch the leaves of *Rhus toxicodendron*, *H<sup>THI</sup> WATHE* (to make sore). The root of *Lacinaria scariosa* (button snake root, or blazing star), *MA<sup>N</sup>KA<sup>N</sup>-SAGI* (hard medicine), was powdered and applied in a poultice for external inflammation and was taken internally for abdominal troubles. *L. spicata* they called *TDE SINDE* (buffalo tail) from the resemblance of its inflorescence, but it was not considered to have any medicinal value.

The bark of *Gymnocladus dioica* (Kentucky Coffee Tree), *NU<sup>N</sup>TITA*, was powdered and mixed with *NIÁ-SHIGA MA<sup>N</sup>KA<sup>N</sup>*, *Cucurbita foetidissima*, and the root of *Lacinaria scariosa*, *MA<sup>N</sup>KA<sup>N</sup>-SAGI*, and the mixture used for a tonic and appetizer. The root of *Silphium laciniatum*, *ZHA-PA* (bitter weed), was given to horses with their salt as a tonic. It was said to give them avidity for water and forage and make them take on flesh—a sort of aboriginal condition powder.

A common ailment among the Omaha is eye trouble,

and for its alleviation various agents were employed, among them being the root of *Echinacea angustifolia*, the hips of *Rosa arkansana*, and various other plants.

Concerning plants of miscellaneous mention, it may be said that when hunting buffaloes on the Platte and Republican rivers, on seeing *Solidago* spp., ZHA SAGE ZI (hard yellow weed), coming into bloom, the people would say: "Now our corn is becoming hard at home on the NI-SHUDE (Missouri river). *Micrampelis lobata*, WA-HTANGA-HI, was called by the people "ghost melons". I suppose the ghostly white, vapory appearance of the blooming vines as seen in the dusk of evening running over the bushes in the hollows of the hills, suggested the name; or perhaps the airy structure of the fruit itself after the decay of the parenchymatous tissue may have suggested it. The pits of *Prunus americana*, KANDE, were marked by burning to make a sort of dice for gambling. Charcoal from *Acer negundo* was used as the agent for the tribal tattooing of girls. Out on the buffalo hunt, when fuel was scarce, they sometimes utilized the great gnarled roots of *Ceanothus americana* for that purpose. The resinous exudation of *Silphium laciniatum* was very commonly used for chewing gum. The root of *Lithospermum canescens*, being red, was often chewed by children to color their gum. I was told by a woman of the INKÁ SABE gens of the Omaha tribe that red corn was a tabu to her gens. *Melilotus alba* was introduced and very widely distributed over the Omaha reservation from the first establishment of the mission. There is a curious circumstance in this connection. Some of the plants sprang up about the mission, having come from the east in the effects of the missionaries. The Indians, coming to the mission, observed it and noticed that its odor resembled *Savastana odorata*, which they already used as incense, and being pleased with its odor, they also, I suppose, since they found it about the mission,

naturally connected it with the white man's form of religion. So they often gathered and carried it home with them, and it has become very generally distributed over the reservation.

## ECONOMIC PLANTS BY FAMILIES

### 1. EQUISETACEAE Michx.

The genus *Equisetum*, of which several species as named below are found in the region occupied by the Omahas, is characterized by having cylindrical, hollow, simple or branched, green stems, the nodes being ringed by a whorl of scales or vestigial leaves, the internodes being fluted, the stem easily separable at the nodes, the whole plant being exceedingly siliceous. *E. arvense* L., *E. hyemale* L., *E. Laevigatum* A. Br., *E. robustum* A. Br., and *E. variegatum*, Schleich.

### 2. PINACEAE Lindl. *Juniperus virginiana* L. (Red cedar), MAAZI.

A small tree, about 5-10 m. in height. Leaves mostly opposite, subulate, spiny. Foliage blue-green when young, becoming rusty brown-green when old. Aments terminal, berry-like cones blue, glaucous. On islands in Platte river and in ravines in bluffs of Missouri river.

### 3. TYPHACEAE J. St. Hil. *Typha latifolia* L. (Cattail), WAHAB-IGASKONTHE.

Stems 1-2 in. high; flat leaves 6-25 mm. broad; spikes dark-brown, staminate and pistillate portions contiguous.

### 4. ALISMACEAE DC. *Sagittaria arifolia* Nutt. (Arrow leaf), SIN.

Glabrous, terrestrial or partially submerged. Leaves broadly sagittate, acute at apex; basal leaves acute. Petioles outward curving.



5. GRAMINEAE Juss. *Savastana odorata* (L.) Scribn.  
(Sweet grass) or (Holy grass), *PEZHE ZONSTA*.

Sheaths smooth; lower leaves elongated, glossy, tender, fragrant. Found in infrequent patches among other herbage in partial shade near clumps of trees.

*Stipa spartea* Trin. (Porcupine grass), *MIKA-HI*;  
*MIKA*, comb; *HI*, plant.

Six to twelve dm. tall. Basal leaves one-third to one-half as long as the culm. Panicle 1-25 dm. long. Awn 1-2 dm. long, usually twice bent, tightly spiral. On prairies.

*Zizania aquatica* L. (Wild rice), *SINWANINDE*.

Erect from annual root, 9-30 dm. tall. Long flat leaves. Pistillate flowers on upper branches, staminate on lower. Of wide range in swamps.

*Zea mays* L., (Maize) (Indian corn), *WAHABE*.

Culms often several from the same fibrous root. Internodes alternately furrowed, sheathed by the bases of the leaves; aborted branches within the furrows. Leaves long, tapering to an acuminate point. Plant 1.5 to 2.5 m. high. Flowers monoecious, protandrous. Staminate inflorescence terminal on central stalk, racemose-paniculate. Pistillate inflorescence axillary, spicate, sometimes branched.

6. ARACEAE. *Acorus calamus* L., (Sweet flag), *MAN-KANINIDA*.

Leaves linear, erect, 5-15 dm. tall. Leaves sharp-pointed and sharp-edged, closely sheathing each other and the scape. Flowers minute, greenish-yellow.

7. CYPERACEAE. J. St. Hil. *Scirpus lacustris* L.  
(Great bulrush) (mat-rush), *SA-HI*.

Perennial by rootstocks; culm terete, 1-3 m. tall. Umbel compound appearing lateral. In marshy places.

8. LILIACEAE. Adans. *Allium* spp. (Wild onions), *MA<sup>N</sup>ZHO<sup>N</sup>KA-MANTANAHA-HI*. *Allium cernuum* Roth., *A. canadense* L., *A. mutabile* Michx., *A. nutallii* S. Wats., *A. reticulatum* Don., and *A. stellatum* Ker.

These are the species of the region and were all used without specific differentiation.

9. SALICACEAE Lindl.

*Populus sargentii* Dode (*Populus deltoides* Marsh), (Cottonwood), *MAA-ZHO<sup>N</sup>*.

Large tree, younger bark grayish-green, dark and rough when old. Leaves glabrous, deltoid-ovate, coarsely crenate, in autumn turning clear, bright yellow before falling, apex abruptly acuminate. Young stems shining, light yellowish green.

*Salix luteosericea* Rydb.

Shrub, 1-6 m. high, grayish bark, leaves linear, yellowish silky; aments at ends of leafy branches. On sandbars.

*S. fluviatilis* Nutt.

Much branched shrub, 1-4 m. high in thickets on sandbars and along streams and ponds. Bark, brown or grayish.

Both these species of *Salix* are commonly called sandbar willow, and by the Omaha *THI 'HE SAGE-HI*.

10. JUGLANDACEAE Lindl.

*Juglans nigra* L. (Black walnut), *TDAGE*.

Large tree, rough, dark bark. Leaflets 13-23, pubescent beneath, rounded at base, apex acuminate. Fruit spherical, nut corrugated, slightly compressed, black.

*Hicoria alba* (L.) Britton.

A large tree, foliage and twigs fragrant when crushed; bark close, leaflets 7-9, long acuminate; but grayish-white, angled, pointed at summit.

*H. glabra* (Mill) Britton.

Tree, bark close, rough; nut brown, angled, pointed; astringent, bitter, inedible.

*H. laciniosa* (Michx. f.) Sarg.

Large tree, bark separating in long, narrow plates; leaflets 7-9; husk thick; nut oblong, pointed at both ends, yellowish-white.

*H. minima* (Marsh) Britton.

Slender tree, bark close, rough; leaflets, 7-9, long acuminate; husk thin, irregularly 4-valved; but short-pointed.

All hickories are called NO<sup>N</sup>SI-HI.

11. BETULACEAE Agardh. *Corylus americana* Walt., (Hazel-nut), U<sup>N</sup>ZHINGA.

A shrub of variable height up to 25 m. Downy shoots, leaves and involucre, the latter open down to the slightly compressed globular nut.

12. FAGACEAE Drude. *Quercus rubra* L., (Red oak), BUUDE-HI.

Large tree in deep woods; bark dark, slightly roughened. Leaves dull green above, paler below; acorn ovoid, 2-3 cm. long, 2-4 times as long as saucer-shaped cup.

*Quercus* spp. other than *rubra*, TASHKA-HI.

13. ULMACEAE Mirbel. *Ulmus falva* Michx. (Red elm) (Slippery elm), EZHO<sup>N</sup> GTHIGTHIDE.

Large tree, twigs rough-pubescent; leaves ovate, rough-pubescent beneath, doubly serrate, acuminate at apex, obtuse inequilateral, cordate at base. Inner bark mucilaginous, may be stripped into long strands.



## 14. MORACEAE Lindl.

*Morus rubra* L. (Red mulberry), *ZHO<sup>N</sup>-ZI*, (Yellow wood).

Bark brown and rough; leaves ovate, nearly orbicular, scabrous above, pubescent beneath, acuminate at apex. Fruit dark purple-red, pendulous.

*Toxylon pomiferum* Raf. (Osage orange), (Bois d'arc), *ZHO<sup>N</sup>ZI-ZHU*. *ZHO<sup>N</sup>*, wood; *ZI*, yellow; *ZHU*, flesh or body.

A spiny tree, shrubby, leaves ovate, glossy, entire, acuminate at apex, base obtuse. Head of pistillate flowers ripening into a hard greenish-yellow, tubercled syncarp.

15. RANUNCULACEAE Juss. *Aquilegia canadensis* L.  
(Wild columbine), *INU-BTHO<sup>N</sup>KITHE-SABE-HI*.

Glabrous, 2-6 dm. high, lower leaves biternate, upper leaves cunate, pale beneath, flowers nodding.

16. BERBERIDACEAE T. and G. *Caulophyllum thalictroides* (L.) Michx. (Blue cohosh), *ZHU-NAKADA-TANGA-MA<sup>N</sup>KA<sup>N</sup>*. *ZHU*, body or flesh; *NAKADA*, hot; *TANGA*, great; *MA<sup>N</sup>KA<sup>N</sup>*, medicine.

Glabrous, glaucous when young, 3-9 dm. high. A large triternate, nearly sessile leaf near summit, generally smaller, similar one near base of inflorescence. Flowers greenish-purple. In deep woods.

17. PAPAVERACEAE B. Juss. *Sanguinaria canadensis* L. (Blood root).

Rootstock horizontal, several cm. long, with thick, fibrous roots; juice red. Leaves palmately 5-9 lobed. Flowers white. Rich, damp woods.

18. GROSSULARIACEAE Dumont. *Ribes missouriensis* Nutt. (Gooseberry), *PEZI*.

Branches stout, gray shreddy bark; spines usually three together, stout, bristles on younger stems. Flowers white, fruit purple. River banks and thickets.

## 19. ROSACEAE B. Juss.

*Rubus occidentalis* L., (Black raspberry), AGATHŪN-KEMONGE-HI.

Stems cane-like, recurved, often rooting at tip. Leaves pinnately 3-foliate, leaflets ovate, acuminate. Fruit purple-black, depressed hemispheric.

*Fragaria virginiana* Duchesne (Wild strawberry), BASHTE.

Rather stout, tufted, dark green; scape equal or shorter than leaves; fruit bright red, ovoid, delicious.

*Rosa arkansana* Porter (Prairie rose), WAZHIDE.

Erect 3-6 dm. high. Stems prickly. Leaflets 7-11, ovate; fruit globose. Prairies.

## 20. POMACEAE L.

*Crataegus coccinea* L.

Shrub or small tree. Leaves broadly ovate, incised and sharply serrate. Fruit bright red, globose, or oval, rarely hairy.

*Grataegus mollis* (T. & G.) Scheele.

Shrub or small tree. Leaves broadly ovate, truncate at base, sharply serrate. Fruit, bright red, hairy.

NOTE—Both these species are commonly called red haw, and by the Omaha TASPAN-HI.

## 21. DRUPACEAE DC.

*Prunus americana* Marsh (Wild plum), KANDE.

Shrub or small tree, branches thorny; leaves ovate, serrate, flowers white, fragrant, drupe yellow or red.

*P. besseyi* Bailey (Sand cherry), NOPA-TANGA.

Shrub, 3-12 dm. high, branches spreading or prostrate; leaves oval, apex and base acute. Flowers, white, in sessile umbels. Fruit edible, somewhat astringent, black or mottled brown.

*P. virginiana* (L.) (Choke cherry), *NU<sup>N</sup>PA ZHINGA*.

Shrub or small slender tree, gray bark; leaves thin, broadly oval; flowers in loose racemes. Drupe nearly black, very astringent.

22. CESALPINACEAE KI. and Darcke. *Gymnocladus dioica* (L.) Koch (Kentucky coffee tree), *NO<sup>N</sup>-TITA HI*.

Large tree, rough bark, leaves large, leaflets 7-15, racemes many-flowered. Pod coriaceous, flat. Sweetish pulp between seeds.

23. PAPILONACEAE L.  
*Melilotus alba* Desv. (Sweet clover), *INU-BTHO<sup>N</sup>-KITHE-HI*.

Erect, 1-3 m. high, branching, white flowers in loose racemes. Leaves fragrant in drying.

*Psorales esculenta* Parsh (Pomme de prairie), *NUG-THE*.

1-5 dm. high, erect, from turning-shaped, farinaceous root. Corolla blue.

*Amorpha canescens* Pursh (Lead plant, shoe string), *TDE-HUN<sup>T</sup>O<sup>N</sup>-HI*.

Bushy, white-canescens shrub, 3-9 dm. high. Leaves sessile or nearly so, leaflets 2-49, almost sessile. Spikes 5-18 cm. long, standard bright blue.

*Falcata comosa* (L.) Kuntze (Hog peanut), *HI<sup>N</sup>BTHI-HI*.

Sometimes perennial. Slender twining vines running over bushes, racemes of purplish or white flowers in great numbers; pods 2.5 mm. long, containing four or five grayish-mottled beans resembling lentils. From the base of the ascending stems leafless vines spread like a network over the ground, bearing geotropic cleistogamous flowers which produce each a single subterranean bean 6-17 mm. in diameter.



*Apios apios* (L.) MacM. (Ground nut), *NU*.

Thick, perennial vines, pinnately 3-7 foliate leaves; rather large brownish-purple or red flowers. Rachis of inflorescence knobby. Stamens diadelphous (9-1). Rootstocks form chains of edible tubers.

24. OXALIDACEAE Lindl. *Oxalis stricta* L. (Yellow sheep-sorrel), *HADE-SATHE*. *HADE*, grass; *SATHE*, sour.

Stem commonly branched, spreading, 1-3 dm. long; foliage pale green; flowers pale yellow. Capsules columnar.

25. RUTACEAE Jusa. *Xanthoxylum americanum* Mill. (Prickly ash), *ZHO<sup>N</sup>-PAHIDHADHA* or *WEDE-HOHO-HI*.

A shrub; leaves pubescent when young, glabrous when old, leaflets 5-11, ovate, opposite, dark green above, lighter beneath; flowers axillary or terminal, appearing before the leaves.

26. ANACARDIACEAE Lindl. *Rhus glabra* L., (Sumac), *MI<sup>N</sup>BDI-HI*.

Shrub 6-60 dm. high; leaves alternate; leaflets 11-31, dark green above, whitish below, sharply serrate; drupe covered with short reddish, acid hairs.

*Rhus toxicodendron* L., (Poison oak).

Low, erect. Leaflets ovate, mostly obtuse, often crenately lobed to resemblance of an oak. Fruit depressed globose.

27. ACERACEAE St. Hil.

*Acer saccharinum* L. (Silver maple), *WENU<sup>N</sup>SHABE-THE-HI*.

A tree with flaky bark, young growth distinctly reddish. Leaves deeply 5-lobed, green above, silvery white below.

*A. negundo* L. (Box-elder), *ZHABATA-ZHO<sup>N</sup>-HI*.

Bushy, gnarled and crooked tree, bark rough. Leaves 3-5 foliate, leaflets ovate, acute. Along streams.

28. RHAMNACEAE Dumort. *Ceanothus americana* L.  
(Jersey tea. Red-root), *TABÉ-HI*.

Stem ascending from deep reddish root, puberulent. Cymose panicles of white flowers. Fruit depressed, nearly black.

29. VITACEAE Lindl. *Vitis vulpina* L., (Wild grape),  
*HAZI*.

Leaves thin, shining, terminal lobe commonly long; branches rounded or slightly angled, greenish, tendrils intermittent; berries bluish-black, 8-10 mm. diameter.

30. TILIACEAE Juss. *Tilia americana* L. (Linden, bass-wood), *HINDE-HI*.

Forest tree with spreading branches, leaves 5-13 cm. wide, coriaceous, sharply serrate, abruptly acuminate. River bottoms.

31. CACTACEAE Lindl. *Lophophora williamsii* Coult.  
(*Echinocactus williamsii* Lem.) (*Anhalonium williamsii* Eng.) (Mescal), *MA<sup>N</sup>KA<sup>N</sup>AKA*.

NOTE—*MA<sup>N</sup>KA<sup>N</sup>*, medicine; *AKA*, a word which gives a suggestion of personality, regarded as distinctly different from any other medicine.

"Napiform cactus" with fissured top, hardly rising above the ground, producing a handsome pink flower in early summer, with flattened tubercles arranged in ribs.—(Havard).

32. ELEAGNACEAE Lindl. *Lepargyrea argentea* (Nutt)  
Greene (Buffalo berry), *ZHO<sup>N</sup>HOJE-WAZHIDE*.

Shrub 2-6 m. high, thorny; leaves oblong, obtuse at apex, cuneate narrowed at base, densely silvery-scurfy on both sides; flowers fascicled at nodes; fruit ovoid, scarlet, acid, edible, 4-6 mm. long.

## 33. CORNACEAE Link.

*Cornus asperifolia* L'Her (Dogwood), *MA<sup>N</sup>SA-ĤTE-HI*.

Shrub, 0.8-3 m. high; leaves broadly ovate, pale beneath, rather dense cymes 3-7 cm. broad; fruit globose, light blue.

*C. amomum* L. (Kinnikinnik), *NINIGA-HI-ĤTE-ZHIDE*.

A shrub 1-3 m. high; bark dark red in winter, grayish in summer; leaves petioled, ovate, acuminate at apex; flowers white, in compact cymes; fruit globose, light blue.

34. OLEACEAE Lindl. *Fraxinus viridis* Michx. (Green ash), *TASHINANGA-HI*.

A tree 20 m. or more in height; leaves glabrous, bright green; leaflets 7-9, occasionally coated with pale tomentum below.

35. ASCLEPIADACEAE Lindl. *Asclepias syriaca* L. (Common milkweed), *WAĤ'DHA-HI*.

Stem stout, simple 9-15 dm. high; leaves ovate, densely pubescent beneath, soon glabrous above; corolla green-purple; hoods ovate, lanceolate with a tooth on each side.

36. VERBENACEAE J. St. Hil. *Verbena stricta* Vent. (Hoary vervain), *PEZHE MA<sup>N</sup>KA<sup>N</sup>*.

Perennial, soft-pubescent; stem 4-angled, leafy, strict, 3-8 dm. high; leaves ovate, lacinate, spikes mostly sessile. Corolla purplish-blue.

## 37. LABIATAE B. Juss.

*Monarda fistulosa* L. (Wild bergamot, Horse-mint), *PEZHE-PA*.

Perennial, fragrant, villous-pubescent, 6-9 dm. high; leaves thin, lanceolate - acuminate, serrate; corolla purplish. Dry hills.



*Mentha canadensis* L. (American wild mint), *PEZHENUBTHO<sup>N</sup>*.

Perennial by suckers; leaves varying, ovate-oblong to lanceolate, tapering at both ends. Very fragrant.

38. SOLANACEAE Pers. *Nicotiana quadrivalvis* Pursh.

Herb about 2 dm. high; viscid-pubescent, low branching. Leaves oblong, or uppermost lanceolate; lower ovata-lanceolate; both ends acute. Calyx teeth much shorter than the tube, about equalling the 4-celled capsule. Tube of corolla about 2 cm. long; 5-lobed limb 3-5 cm. in diameter. Cultivated by Indians from the Missouri river to Oregon; their most prized tobacco. Perhaps derived from *N. bigelovii* Watson.

39. RUBIACEAE B. Juss. *Galium triflorum* Michx. (Fragrant bedstraw), *WAU-PEZHE* or *WAU-INU-MA<sup>N</sup>KA<sup>N</sup>*.

Perennial, procumbent, shining, delicately fragrant in drying; leaves in 6's. In deep woods.

40. CAPRIFOLIACEAE Vent. *Symphoricarpos symphoricarpos* (L.) MacM. (Coral berry).

Shrub 6-15 dm. high. Leaves oval, entire, glabrous above or nearly so, soft-pubescent, whitish below. Corolla pinkish, berry purplish-red, ovoid, globose.

41. CUCURBITACEAE B. Juss. *Micrampelis lobata* Michx.) Greene.

Stem nearly glabrous, angular and grooved, climbing on bushes to height of 4-7 m.; leaves thin, sharply and deeply 3-7 lobed; copious and pretty white flowers, fruit ovoid, greenish-white, spiny, dry and bladdery after opening.

42. COMPOSITAE Adans.

*Lacinaria scariosa* (L.) Hill (Button snake-root, Blazing star), *MA<sup>N</sup>KA<sup>N</sup>-SAGI*, "the hard medicine."

Stout stem 3-18 dm. high; lanceolate leaves, or

lower spatulate oblong very numerous scales of the involucre, with rounded tips, often purple on the margins. Flowers bluish-purple.

*L. spicata* (L.) Kuntze (Dense button snake-root. Blazing star), *TDE-SINDE*, "buffalo tail."

In low grounds, 6-18 dm. high, dense spike, 1-4 dm. long. Flowers blue-purple.

*Solidago* (Golden rod), *ZHA-SAGI-ZI*, "hard yellow weed."

Perennial erect herbs, sometimes woody at base, mostly simple stems, alternate simple, toothed or entire leaves; small heads of both tubular and radiate yellow flowers in panicles, thyrsi, or capitate clusters. Bracts of involucre imbricated in several series, outer successively shorter.

Numerous species of *Solidago* are found in Nebraska, including *S. arguta* Ait., *S. canadensis* L., *S. missouriensis* Nutt., *S. mollis* Bartl., *S. nemoralis* Ait., *S. rigida* L., *S. rupestris* Raf., and *S. serotina* Ait., the latter being the state flower.

*Silphium perfoliatum* L. (Cup plant), *ZHABAHÓHO-HI*.

Stem square, glabrous, branched above or simple, 1-2.4 m. high, around which ovate, coarsely toothed leaves are connate into cup holding rainwater. Moist soil.

*S. laciniatum* L. (Compass plant), (Pilot weed), *ZHA-PA*.

Rough, very resinous 2-5 m. high, basal leaves pinnatifid; stem leaves alternate, vertical, edges tending to north and south.

*Helianthus tuberosus* L. (Jerusalem artichoke), *PANĤE*.

Perennial by fleshy, thickened, root-stocks, ending in ovate, edible, tubers. Stems branched above, 2-3.5 m. high; leaves ovate, acuminate, upper alternate, lower opposite.

*Artemisia gnaphaloides* Nutt. (Prairie mugwort)  
**PEZHE-HOTE.**

Perennial; stem white-mentose, much branched, 3-12 dm. high; heads numerous, erect, spicate-paniculate. Dry prairies.

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Of fungi they had found the useful qualities of the meadow mushroom and the several species of mushrooms which are found growing on decaying wood in the woodland along the Missouri river. *Ustilago maydis* was used for food while still firm, before maturity.

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## PLANTS ARRANGED ACCORDING TO USES AMONG THE OMAHA

### I.

#### DOMESTIC USES

##### 1. IMPLEMENTS

For War, Hunting and Fishing

Arrow shafts: *Cornus asperifolia*, **MA<sup>N</sup>SA-HTE-HI.**

Bows, *Fraxinus viridis*, **TASHINANGA-HI**; *Toxylon pomiferum*, **ZHO<sup>N</sup>-ZI ZHU.**

Fishweirs, *Salix* spp.

For Household Employments

Matting: *Scirpus lacustris*, **SA-HI.**

Basketry: *Salix fluviatilis*, *S. luteosericea*, **THIHE-SAGE-HI.**

Mortars for corn: *Ulmus americana*, **EZHON-SKA-HI**; *Quercus* spp., **TASHKA-HI.**

Pipestems: *Fraxinus viridis*, **TASHINANGA-HI.**



## 2. CEREMONIAL AGENTS

Incense: *Juniperus virginiana*, MAAZI-HI; *Savastana odorata*, PEZHE ZONSTA.

Sacred tent: *Populus sargentii*, MAA-ZHO<sup>N</sup>.

Ritual: *Artemisia ludoviciana*, A. *gnaphalodes*, PEZHE HOTE; *Populus sargentii*, MAA-ZHO<sup>N</sup>; *Salix* spp.; *Juniperus virginiana*, MAAZI-HI; *Zea mays*, WAHABE; *Savastana odorata*, PEZHE-ZONSTA; *Typha latifolia*, WAHABE GASKONTHE; *Fraxinus viridis*, *Lophophora williamsii* Coult. (*Echinocactus williamsii* Lem.), MAN<sup>N</sup>KAN<sup>N</sup>AKA.

NOTE—All plants in this table are native to Nebraska and of aboriginal use, except *Lophophora*, which is not native nor of ancient use, but was imported in modern times for use in the borrowed cult of the "Mescal Society", and *Toxylon pomiferum* which in aboriginal time was imported from southern Oklahoma.

## 3. ESTHETIC USES

Perfumes for hair-oil: *Rosa arkansana*, WAZHIDE. *Monarda fistulosa*, PEZHE-PA.

Perfumes for general uses: *Aquilegia canadensis*, INUBTHO<sup>N</sup>KITHE-SABE-HI; *Xanthoxylum americana*, ZHO<sup>N</sup>-PAHI-DHADHA, *Galium triflorum*, WAU-INU-MAN<sup>N</sup>KAN<sup>N</sup> or WAU-PEZHE.

Skin stain: *Sanguinaria canadensis*.

## 4. GENERAL USES

Vapor bath lodges: *Salix* spp.

Fibres and cordage: *Ulmus fulva*, ZHO<sup>N</sup>GTHI-GTHIDE (ZHO<sup>N</sup>, wood; GTHIGTHIDE, slippery); *Tilia americana*, HINDE-HI.

Snow shoes: *Hicoria* spp., NO<sup>N</sup>SI-HI.

Hairbrushes: *Stipa spartea*, MIKA-HI.

Dyes: *Rhus glabra*, MI<sup>N</sup>BDI-HI; *Quercus rubra*, BUUDE-HI; *Acer saccharinum*, WENU<sup>N</sup>-SHABETHE-HI; *Populus sargentii*, MAA-ZHO<sup>N</sup>; *Juglans nigra*, TDAGE; *Acer Saccharinum*, WENU<sup>N</sup>-SHABE-THE-HI.

## II.

## FOODS

## 1. FOODS PROPER

Roots, bulbs and tubers: *Allium* spp., MAN<sup>N</sup>ZHON-KA-MANTANAHA-HI; *Apios apios*, NU; *Helianthus tuberosa*, PA<sup>N</sup>HE; *Psoralea esculenta*, NU-GTHE; *Sagittaria latifolia*, SI<sup>N</sup>.

Potherbs and greens: *Asclepias syriaca*, WAHTHA.

Bark: *Ulmus fulva*, ZHON-GTHIGTHIDE.

Fungi: *Ustilago maydis*, WAHABE-HTHI.

They also used the meadow mushroom and the several species of edible mushrooms which are found on decaying wood in the woodland along the Missouri river.

Fruits, seeds and nuts: *Corylus americana*, UN-ZHINGA; *Juglans nigra*, TDAGE; *Quercus rubra*, BUUDE; *Crataegus mollis*, C. *coccinea*, TASPAN; *Fragaria virginiana*, BASHTE; *Lepargyrea argentea*, ZHON-HOJE-WAZHIDE; *Prunus besseyi*, NONPA TANGA; *P. virginiana*, NONPA ZHINGA; *P. americana*, KANDE; *Ribes missouriensis*, PEZHI; *Rubus occidentalis*, AGATHUNKEMONGE-HI; *Falcata comosa*, HIN<sup>N</sup>BTHI ABE; *Viburnum lentago*, *Vitis vulpina*, HAZI; *Zea mays*, WAHABE; *Zizania aquatica*, SIN<sup>N</sup>WANINDE.

Sugar and syrup: *Acer saccharinum*, WENU-SHABATHE-HI; *A. negundo*, ZHABATE-ZHON-HI.

## 2. BEVERAGES

*Ceanothus americana*, TABE-HI.

*Crataegus mollis*, C. *Coccinea*, TASPAN-HI.

*Mentha canadensis*, PEZHE NUBTHON.

*Verbena stricta*, PEZHE-MAN<sup>N</sup>KAN.

*Rubus occidentalis*, AGATHUNKEMON<sup>N</sup>GE-HI.

## 3. SMOKING

*Nicotiana quadrivalvis*, *Cornus sericea*, NINIGA-HIHTE-ZHIDE.

*Rhus glabra*, MIN<sup>N</sup>BDI-HI.

## III.

## MEDICINES

## 1. PROPERTIES and USES

Anaesthetic (local): *Echinacea angustifolia*.

Antitode for snakebites, stings and septic conditions: *Echinacea angustifolia*.

Astringent for wounds and open sores: *Amorpha canescens*, TDE HUN<sup>N</sup>TO<sup>N</sup>-HI.

Carminative: *Mentha canadensis*, PEZHE NUB-THO<sup>N</sup>.

Febrifuge: *Artemisia gnaphalodes*, PEZHE-HOTE; *Caulophyllum thalictroides*, ZHU NAKADA TANGA MAN<sup>N</sup>KAN<sup>N</sup>.

Moxa: *Amorpha canescens*, TDE-HUN<sup>N</sup>TO<sup>N</sup>-HI.

Poultice: *Oenothera rhombipetala*, WEOSHI; *Asclepias tuberosa*, KI<sup>N</sup>U-MAKAN<sup>N</sup>; *Oxalis stricta*, HADE SATHE; *Rhus glabra*, MI<sup>N</sup>BDI-HI; *Lacinaria scariosa*, MAN<sup>N</sup>KAN<sup>N</sup>-SAGI.

Tonic: *Acorus calamus*, *Silphium laciniatum* (for horses), ZHA PA.

Smoke treatment: ASHUDE-KITHE; *S. perfoliatum*, ZHABAHOHO-HI.

## 2. DISEASES

Abdominal troubles: *Lacinaria scariosa*, MAN<sup>N</sup>-KAN<sup>N</sup>-SAGI.

Eye troubles: *Echinacea angustifolia*, *Symphoricarpos symphoricarpos*, *Rosa arkansana*, WAZHIDE.

Fever: *Caulophyllum thalictroides*, ZHU NAKADA TANGA MAN<sup>N</sup>KAN<sup>N</sup>; *Artemisia gnaphalodes*, PEZHE HOTE.

Headache: *Artemisia gnaphalodes*, PEZHE HOTE; *Monarda fistulosa*, PEZHE-PA.

Inflammation: *Lacinaria scariosa*, MAN<sup>N</sup>KAN<sup>N</sup>-SAGI.

Nasal hemorrhage: *Artemisia gnaphalodes*, PEZHE HOTE.



## IV.

## PLANTS OF CASUAL MENTION

1. *Solidago* spp., ZHA SAGE ZI.
2. *Micrampelis lobata*, WAHA TANGA-HI.
3. *Prunus americana*, KANDE.
4. *Acer negundo*, ZHÁBATA-ZHON<sup>N</sup>-HI.
5. *Ceanothus americana*, TABÉ-HI.
6. *Silphium laciniatum*, PEZHE-PA.
7. *Zea mays* (red variety), WAHÁBE.
8. *Melilotus alba*, INU-BTHON<sup>N</sup>-KITHE-HI.

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NOTE—This report is of special interest in that it contains an excellent plate of *Lophophora williamsii* and one of *L. lewinii* as they are therein specifically distinguished.

# SOME NATIVE NEBRASKA PLANTS WITH THEIR USES BY THE DAKOTA<sup>1</sup>

BY MELVIN RANDOLPH GILMORE, M. A.

[Being the result of inquiry among the Oglala Dakota on Pine Ridge Reservation, August, 1912.]

## MONOCOTYLEDONEAE

### I. ALISMACEAE. *Sagittaria* sp. PSHITÓLA.

Tubers used for food after boiling till the peeling slips off.

### II. LILIACEAE. *Yucca glauca*. HUPÉSTULA.

The root was used like soap in washing the scalp. The Indians said, "It makes the hair grow." The most ordinary saponific was the ashes of deciduous trees.

Another use for *Yucca* was in the contrivance of a fire-making apparatus, on the high plain where wood was absent. The hard sharp-pointed leaves were very firmly bound into a slender bundle forming the fire-drill to be twirled by the hands. The hearth was made of the peeled and well dried stem of the plant, a depression was cut in one side in which the point of the drill was inserted and twirled until it smouldered, when the breath was blown upon it till flame sprang up.

Another use was in tanning hides. The roots of *Yucca* were boiled hard and, after cooling, the decoction

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<sup>1</sup>In spelling the Dakota words in this paper I have used the letters according to their continental values instead of the English, for the sake of clearness. Each vowel forms a syllable. The letter "h" with a dot over it represents the German sound of "ch." An apostrophe after a letter represents an explosive sound of that letter.



was sprinkled over the hides after they had been treated with the brain-liver-marrow dressing.

III. ARACEAE. *Acorus calamus*. *SINKPELA TA WOTE*. (Food of the muskrat).

The root was gathered and dried and taken as a carminative and also chewed at will for its agreeable aromatic flavor.

IV. TYPHACEAE. *Typha latifolia* L. *WIHUTA HU*.

The down was used for filling pillows and especially for padding cradles and quilting baby wrappings.

Children used the leaves in playing at making mats and so forth, but because of their brittleness after drying they were not put to serious purpose by adults. From the name, *WIHUTA HU*, it would seem to have been in common use to spread at the bottom of the tipi, for *WIHUTA* means the bottom of a tent and *HU* means plant stem.

V. CYPERACEAE. *Scirpus lacustris* L. *PSA*.

The tender white part of the base of the stem was eaten fresh and uncooked.

The long stems were made into a ball by bending over the base of several together, then the remaining length of stems was braided into a swinging handle, the whole contrivance forming the instrument of a children's game.

Mats for household use were woven from the stems after they were first pressed flat between thumb and fingers.

VI. POACEAE. *Savastana odorata*.

This grass was used in propitiatory rites in order to enlist the good offices of the divine mediator, *WOHPA*, in the cause of the person who was offering worship to a benevolent deity.

*Zizania aquatica* L. *PSI<sup>N</sup>*.

The grain formed an important and prized item of food, so important as to give the name *PSI<sup>N</sup>-HNA-KETU-WI* to the month of the Dakota calendar corresponding to September; *PSI<sup>N</sup>*, rice; *HNAKETU*, to lay up to dry; *WI*, moon.

VII. RANUNCULACEAE. *Thalictrum purpurascens* L. *WAZIMNA*.

When the fruits approach maturity in August the tops are broken off and stored in bags for their agreeable odor, being rubbed and scattered on the clothing at any time when the effect is desired. They say that the fragrance is emitted more when the substance is dampened, and that it is *LILA WASHTEMNA*—very fragrant. They speak of a number of plants as being *WASHTEMNA* which we Europeans do not think of as remarkable for fragrance. But with them whatever gives a suggestion of the fresh outdoors is *WASHTEMNA*, though its odor be ever so evanescent and slight.

VIII. SALICACEAE. *Populus* sp. *WÁGA CHAN<sup>N</sup>*.

The wood was used for fuel. The standing trees of large size were sometimes made depositories of dead bodies in the tree burial of old times. The body might be placed in the hollow trunk of a tree or laid on a support placed across branches. Green cottonwood bark was fed to their horses. They said it was as good for horse feed as the white man's oats. In spring when sap was abundant young sprouts were sometimes peeled and the inner bark was eaten by people because of its sweet taste and agreeable flavor. Even in winter the inner bark was chewed to extract its sweetness, and after chewing the fibre was rejected.

A very interesting and charming use for the leaves was had by children in play. They tore the leaf down

a little way from the tip along the midrib, and at an equal distance from the tip they tore the leaf in a little way from the margin of each side and turned back these two parts to represent smoke flaps, then turned the two margins of the leaf together and pinned them so with a splinter and had a realistic toy tipi. Children would make a number of such tipis and set them in a circle, just as the tribal encampment was set in a circle. It is interesting to note this manifestation of the inventive genius and resourcefulness of the Indian child mind thus reacting to its environment and providing its own amusement. Children sometimes gathered the fruits of the cottonwood before they were scattered by the wind and used the cottony seeds like gum for chewing.

*Salix fluviatilis* Nutt. WAHPÉ POPA.

The stems were peeled and woven into baskets.

IX. NYCTAGINACEAE. *Allionia nyctaginea* Michx.  
(Wild Four-O'clock). POÍPIE.

The root was boiled and used as a febrifuge. It was also boiled with *Brauneria pallida* root for a vermifuge. It was taken for four nights and next morning "the worms came away". If one has "the big worm" (tape-worm) "it comes away too". Boiled with *Brauneria* it was applied to swellings of limbs, arms or legs, always being applied by rubbing downward, never upward.

X. CHENOPODIACEAE. *Chenopodium albidum* L.  
WAHPÉ TOTO.

The young plants were boiled for food.

XI. POLYGONACEAE. *Rumex altissimus* (wood).  
SHIÁKIPI.

The green leaves were bound on boils for the purpose of drawing them out. Dried leaves were



crushed up and bound on with green leaves for the same purpose.

- XII. MALVACEAE. *Malvastrum coccineum* (Pursh.) A. Gray. HEYOKA TA PEZHUTA.

Used to deaden sensation of pain, so that, when rubbed on hands and arms by jugglers, they were able to pick up boiling meat from the pot to the mystification of onlookers.

- XIII. ULMACEAE. *Celtis occidentalis* L. (Hackberry). YAMANUMANUGAPI CHAN.

The fruits were pounded up as were the cherries and dried for use as a condiment for seasoning the meat in cooking.

- XIV. MORACEAE. *Humulus lupulus* L. (Hops). CHAN IYUWE.

The fruits were boiled to make a drink used as a remedy for fever and for intestinal pains.

- XV. CONVOLVULACEAE. *Cuscuta* sp. (Dodder).

My Oglala informant knew nothing about it, but my interpreter, who was an Apache, said his tribe call it "rattlesnake food".

They said that rattlesnakes take it into their dens for food.

- XVI. SOLANACEAE. *Physalis heterophylla*. (Ground cherry). T'AMANIOHPE.

Made into a sauce. When plentiful enough they are sometimes dried for winter use.

*Physalis lanceolata*. (Inedible groundcherry). Also called T'AMANIOHPE by the Dakota.

The only use of this species is by children in play. They inflate the large persistent calyx with the breath and pop the same by suddenly striking it on the forehead or hand.

- XVII. ASCLEPIADACEAE. *Asclepias syriaca* L. (Big milkweed). *WAĤCHAH CHA*.

So named from the bursting out of the ripened pods like a flower, *WAĤCHA*. Used for food, the sprouts in early spring, later the bud clusters, and last the young seed pods, while firm and green, are cooked by boiling, usually with meat.

- XVIII. SCROPHULARIACEAE. *Pentstemon grandiflorus* Nutt. *WAĤCHAHSHA*.

The root was boiled and used for pains in the chest.

- XIX. VERBENACEAE. *Verbena stricta* Vent. (Common wild Verbena). *CHAN<sup>N</sup> HALOGA PEZHUTA*.

The leaves are steeped and the infusion taken for stomach ache.

- XX. LAMIACEAE. *Monarda fistulosa* L. (Horsemint). *ĤEHAKA TA PEZHUTA* (medicine of the red elk).

Flowers and leaves boiled together in an infusion to be taken for abdominal pains.

Bachelors carry bunches of it in their clothes for the pleasant fragrance.

*Monarda fistulosa* L. (var.?)

Used as the Omaha use it for a perfume.

*Hedeoma* sp. (Pennyroyal). *MA<sup>N</sup>KAN<sup>N</sup>CHĪAKA*.

Used in form of an infusion for colds; also used as a flavor and tonic appetizer in diet for the sick.

*Mentha canadensis* L. (Wild mint). *CHĪAKA*.

It was used as a flavor for meat. In cooking or in packing dried meat wild mint was laid in alternate layers with the meat in the packing case. *CHĪAKA* was also used to make a hot aqueous beverage like tea.

XXI. ROSACEAE. *Amelanchier alnifolia*. (June berry).  
WIPÁZUKA.

I did not see any of the fruit but heard mention of it as being gathered along the streams.

*Prunus americana* Marsh. (Wild Plum). KAN<sup>TE</sup>.

Used fresh, raw or made into a sauce, or boiled and pitted and dried for winter use. Dried plums are called KAN<sup>SHTÁGIYAPI</sup>. In the days of buffalo hunting the scrapings of the hides in preparing them for tanning were saved and mixed with the plums and dried together. When asked if the scrapings of the hides of domestic cattle are now so used the Indians replied that they do not taste so good and so are not desirable.

Plum seeds are used to make the playing pieces of a certain game in a manner like dice. Three pairs of pieces are used in this game, the devices being burned on the plum pit. The pieces are cast in a small basket woven of willow withes. The play is made by striking against the ground the bottom of the basket containing the plum pits.

*Prunus besseyi* Bailey. (Sand cherry). AON<sup>YEYAPI</sup>.

Used for food in fresh state or dried for winter, first being pitted as are the plums.

*Prunus melanocarpa* (A. Nels.) Rydb. (Western choke-cherry). CHAN<sup>PA</sup>.

Used for food in fresh state, or prepared for winter use by pounding to a pulp with a stone mortar and pestle. The entire cherry, pit and all, is pulped and formed into small cakes and dried in the sun.

The cherries are prepared thus in large quantities, the cherry harvest being an event of great importance in the domestic economy of the people, so great that the month in which the cherries ripen is called in the Dakota calendar by the name of that fruit, "Ripe



cherry month", *CHAN<sup>N</sup>PA SAPA WI*, literally, "Black-cherry moon". The people travel for miles to the streams where the cherries are abundant and there go into camp and work up the cherries while they last, or until they have prepared as great a quantity as they require. The sun dance began on the day of the full moon when the cherries were ripe.

XXII. PAPILIONACEAE. *Melilotus alba* L. (Sweet clover).

Has been introduced as a weed and the Dakota, noting the likeness of its odor in withering to that of sweet grass, *Savastana odorata*, gather handfuls of it to hang up in their houses for the pleasure of its fragrance. *Astragalus crassicaarpus* Nutt. (Buffalo pea, Ground plum). *PTE TA WOTE*, literally "Buffalo food", *PTE*, buffalo; *WOTE*, food; *TA*, sign of the genitive case.

Sometimes eaten raw and fresh by people.

*Astragalus canadensis* L.

An infusion was made from the root to be used as a febrifuge for children.

*Glycyrrhiza lepidota* Pursh. (Wild licorice). *WI NAWIZI*, "jealous woman".

The leaves are chewed to make a poultice for sores on horses. The root is kept in the mouth for toothache; "it tastes strong at first, but after a while becomes sweet." The leaves are steeped and applied to the ears for earache.

*Psoralea esculenta* Pursh. (Pomme blanche, Pomme de prairie). *TÍPSILA* (Oglala dialect; *TÍPSINA* (Yankton dialect).

The roots were an important item of the vegetal diet. They were peeled and eaten fresh, or dried for winter use. For drying they were peeled and braided into festoons by their tapering roots, or were split into

halves or quarters and after drying were stored in any convenient container.

*Psoralea floribunda* Nutt. *TICHANICHA-HU*.

Two other plants (unidentified) and root of *P. floribunda* boiled and used as a remedy for consumption. In summer, garlands were made of the tops of this plant and worn like hats in hot weather.

*Parosela enneandra* (Nutt.) Britton.

The root said to be poisonous. By the description of its effect as given by my informant, the wife of Fast Horse of the Oglala tribe of Dakota, I think that it must be a powerful narcotic.

*Parosela aurea* (Nutt.) Britton. *PEZHUTA PA*, (bitter medicine).

The leaves were used to make an infusion to drink in cases of stomach ache and dysentery.

XXIII. CACTACEAE. *Opuntia humifusa*. *U<sup>N</sup>KCHELA T<sup>A</sup><sup>N</sup>KA*, (big cactus).

Large yellow blossoms.

The fruits of this cactus were stewed for food and sometimes eaten raw. They were also dried for winter. The cactus fruit is called *TASPU<sup>N</sup>*. Sometimes when food was very scarce the stems of this cactus were cleared of their spines and roasted for food.

XXIV. ACERACEAE. *Acer negundo* L. (Boxelder). *CHA<sup>N</sup> SHUSHKA*.

Sugar was made from the sap of this tree by gashing in the spring. The Dakota word for sugar is *CHA<sup>N</sup> HA<sup>N</sup>PI*, which is significant of the aboriginal sugar-making process. *CHA<sup>N</sup>* is the Dakota word for wood or tree, *HA<sup>N</sup>PI* is the word for juice, so the conventionalized term for sugar indicates its origin from tree sap. Box elder wood was used to obtain charcoal for tattooing.

- XXV. ANCARDACEAE. *Rhus glabra* L. (Smooth Sumac). CHA<sup>N</sup> ZÍZI.

The leaves when turning scarlet in the fall were gathered and dried for smoking.

*Rhus trilobata* Nutt. CHA<sup>N</sup> WISKÚYE SHA.

The ripe, red fruits were boiled very thoroughly with the fruits of *Lepargyrea argentea* to make a red dye. The *Rhus* fruits were probably used for effect as a mordant, though they may also have contributed to the color effect as well.

- XXVI. JUGLANDACEAE. *Juglans nigra* L. (Black walnut). CHA<sup>N</sup> SAPA.

By the description of my informant I thought a certain tree found growing on WAZI WAKPA (Solomon River?) far south from the winter camp of the Dakota must be black walnut. His wife said a black dye was made from the roots of the tree. Afterwards by specimen it was identified as black walnut, but the Santee Dakota call the walnut HMA.

- XXVII. CORNACEAE. *Cornus amomum* Mill. (Kinikinnik.) CHA<sup>N</sup> SHÁSHA.

The inner bark was dried for the purpose of smoking.

- XXVIII. RUBIACEAE. *Galium triflorum* Mich.

Among stores of perfume plants was one which by odor and by usual appearance of broken fragment I judged to be this plant, and as it grows in the country of the Dakota was probably used by them, since it was so used by the Omaha.

- XXIX. CAPRIFOLIACEAE. *Symphoricarpos symphoricarpos* L. MacM. KA<sup>N</sup> TÓ-HU.

The green, inner bark was used together with root of *Brauneria pallida* to make a decoction for sore eyes. The leaves of this plant were also used alone for the



same purpose. The wood was used to make charcoal used in tattooing.

XXX. ASTERACEAE. *Gutierrezia sarothrae* (Pursh.) Britton and Rusby. *PEZHÍ ZIZI*, (yellow herb).

Used as a medicine for horses in case of too lax a condition of the bowels. The flowering tops of the herb are boiled and the horses are caused to drink the bitter infusion by being kept from drinking other water.

*Grindelia squarrosa* (Pursh.) Dunal. *PTE ÍCHI YOHA*.

The tops are used to make an infusion which is given to children for stomach ache.

*Ratibida columnaris* (Sims.) D. Don. (Prairie Cone-flower). *WAHCHÁ-ZI-CHIKALA*.

The leaves were used to make a hot aqueous drink like tea, merely as a food accessory. The flowers are used as an auxiliary to other plants (not yet identified), in preparation of a remedy for chest pains and other ailments, and, with certain others (also unidentified), as a remedy for wounds. The people said of it that it is *LILA WASHTEMNA*—very pleasant to smell.

*Brauneria pallida* (Nutt.) Britton. (Nigger-head, Black Sampson.) *ICHÁHPE-HU*.

The root was used for all sorts of ailments. It was applied to areas of inflammation to relieve the burning sensation. It was said to give a feeling of coolness. It was probably used as an antidote for snake bites as with other tribes, though my informant did not seem to know of that use, which I thought strange, as the knowledge of this property of it is so common among the Omaha. My interpreter, a Mexican Indian, volunteered the information that it was used by his people for snake bites.

*Helianthus tuberosus* L. (Jerusalem artichoke.) *PAN-GÍ-HU*.

The tubers were boiled for food, sometimes fried after boiling. They said that too free a use of them in the dietary caused flatulence.

*Helianthus annuus* L. (Sunflower.) *WAHCHÁ ZI*, (yellow flower).

An infusion used for chest pains was made from the heads, they first being cleared of involucre bracts. When the sunflower grew large and was in full flower the people would say, "Now the buffalo are fat and the meat is good".

*Ambrosia artemisiaefolia* L. (Ragweed.) *PEZHÚTA PA*, (bitter medicine).

An infusion was made from the leaves and small tops of this plant to be taken as a remedy for bloody flux, and also to stop vomiting.

*Boebera papposa* (Vent.) Rydb. (Fetid marigold.) *PIZPÍZA TA WOTE*, (Prairie-dog food).

They say it is found more abundantly than elsewhere about prairie dog towns, and that it is a choice food of this animal.

It is used in conjunction with *Gutierrezia sarothrae*, *PEZHÍ ZIZI*, in making a medicine for cough in horses.

*Artemisia* sp. (Mugwort, Wild sage, Wormwood).

Short Bull, the well-known Brulé chief, said the larger *Artemisia* (*Artemisia gnaphaloides*) was used by men in purificatory rites, as in case of unwitting infraction of a *tabu*. In the Dakota mythology the *TON*, or immaterial essence or spirit of *Artemisia* is repugnant to malevolent powers, wherefore it is proper to use it in exorcising evil spirits, either by burning the herb or in lustrations with an infusion of it. Short

Bull said the little sage (*Artemisia cana* Pursh.) is used in purificatory rites by women after menstruation.



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